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DECEMBER 1990
ISSUE 27
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THE One

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL!

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FOR AMIGA, ATARI ST AND PC GAMES



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From The Assembly Line And US Gold



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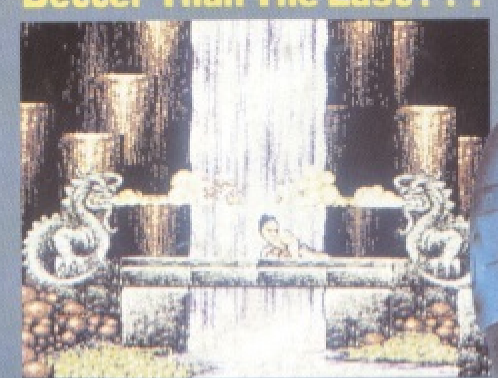


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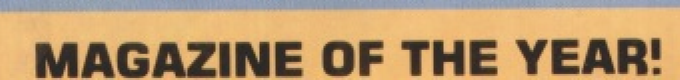


GOLDEN AXE
24 Carat Combat

THE FIRST SAMURAI
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- **Sim Earth**: Making The World A Better Place...
- **RoboCop 2**: It's A Monster!...
- **Midwinter II**: Defrosted...
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- WIN! A **Team Suzuki** Day Out With Gremlin...
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MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR!

ARE YOU MAN ENOUGH TO

C64 version



Atari ST version



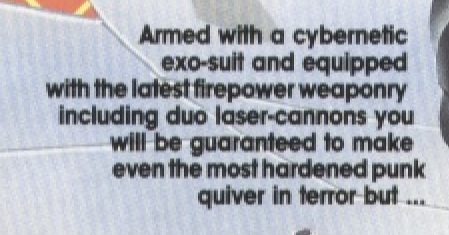
Amiga version

Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.

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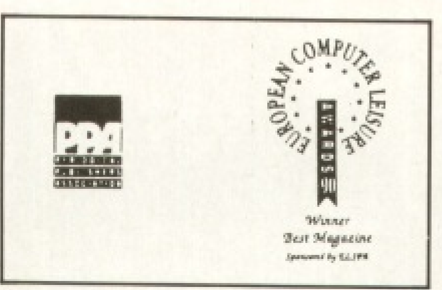
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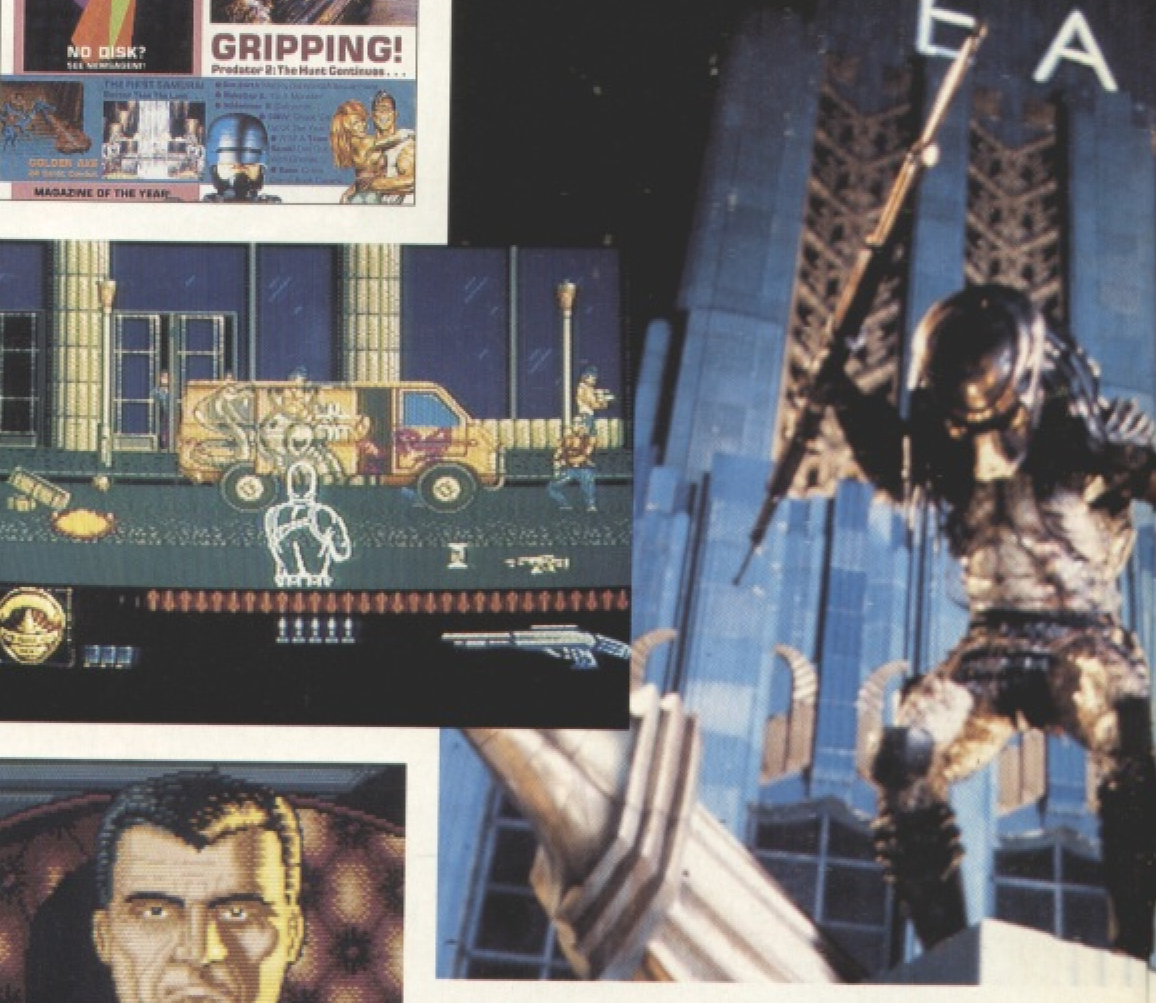
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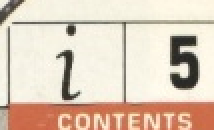


CONT

DECEMBER 1990









ISSUE 27



ADVERTISERS INDEX

WHO'S advertising what and where.

YOU MAY be used to reading reams of opinionated waffle elsewhere, but here we prefer to let the games speak for themselves. Relevant scenes are shown, with informative captions used to help convey the 'feel' of the game. Provided with each review are opinions highlighting any good and bad points, plus prices, release dates and ratings where possible. Basically there's something for everyone – at best a highly detailed review and at worst a highly detailed preview. There's nothing clever, just straightforward facts and ratings. Updates follow where appropriate.

GRAPHICS
Not necessarily how colourful or well drawn they are, but how well they are used.

SOUND
Again, not a reflection of quantity or indeed quality of sound, but how well it's used.

PLAYABILITY
How does the game feel? Is it addictive or just plain uninteresting.

VALUE
Essentially a reflection of lasting interest – how much game you get for your money.

OVERALL
A useful point of reference – a summary of the preceding ratings.

HEY YOU!

WRITE TO THE EDITOR with your views and queries and you could win £100 of software and an exclusive The One T-Shirt. If there's something that's bugging you, about The One, software or life in general, or there's anything you want to know, whether it's about a release, tips or a technical problem, or even if you just want to reminisce, then don't hesitate to drop us a line. If you don't want your letter printed, please state very clearly NOT FOR PUBLICATION.

Each month Gary Penn picks out the most entertaining, thought-provoking or opinionated letter. We receive hundreds of letters and read everything we get, but unfortunately there's not space to print them all. This page represents a choice selection of the latest.

SEND ALL YOUR views and queries to...

Gary Penn
The One
Priory Court
30-32 Farringdon Lane
LONDON
EC1R 3AU

OR FAX YOUR views and queries on...

(071) 490 1095

AND DON'T FORGET to include your full address, T-Shirt size and machine format!

A TWIST IN THE TALE

Dear The One
I've just seen **Oliver Twist** on the TV. It's an old film but it has touched my heart. After that, turning back to my ST, I thought why software companies did not take movies, or tales, such as Oliver Twist, **David Copperfield** and the like, into the computer scene. Maybe they think that such games wouldn't sell, and I'm afraid they could be right. Children today read comics, watch movies, all the same: violence, violence and more violence. Is goodness out of place at present? I'm not saying that shoot 'em ups and the like must be banned, but isn't really there a place for non-violent games? Let's think that a great number of games players are less than 10 years old.
Agustin Malave, Madrid, Spain

It's true (ish) – such 'nice' games probably wouldn't sell. As for non-violent games... there are quite a few. Try **E-Motion**, **Klax**, **Pipe-Mania**, **Tetris**, **Plotting**, **Puzznic**, **Railroad Tycoon**, **Loopz** *(see News)... the list goes on. Most of them are puzzlers though, which may not be your cup of tea. More abstract violence can be found in 'cute' games such as* **Helter Skelter** *and* **Rainbow Islands**, *though it's debatable whether this has the same 'effect' as more obviously violent software such as* **Operation Wolf**. *Opinions regarding the effects of so-called violent software should be sent to the usual address. Meanwhile, Agustin wins himself £100 worth of software and a free T-Shirt for his thoughtful comments.*

CONSOLED

Dear The One
I decided to get an Amiga 500, so I ordered one out of a Mail Order catalogue for £499. I couldn't afford cash as I am a married man with two children. But believe me it was worth it. I got some free games with it, and we've managed to buy one game, **Pac-Mania**, which was a mistake on my part as the kids beat the pants off me.

Anyway, I got the Amiga because I thought it was the 'in' computer, but now I read in your mag (which is the most informative of the lot) that consoles are taking over and the ST and Amiga are dying. The reason I got the Amiga was that I thought it would last a good few years and the kids would grow up with it and as well as playing games would learn a bit about computers as they are the future. Any idiot can plug a cartridge in a console and blast away.
J Noble, Whitby North, Yorkshire
PS Is there any way you can get good second-hand software at a reasonable price, as £20-30 is a bit too steep for me, but I wouldn't touch pirated software.

Don't lose any sleep, Mr Noble – the Amiga's going to be around for a few years yet. How the console situation will develop though remains to be seen, but here at The One we don't think anything radical will happen for the next year or so (that's put our neck on the line!). As for cheap second-hand software... you could try our Classified section. Alternatively, there are many mail order companies advertising within these pages, all offering decent discounts on 'first-hand' software, old and new.

TECHNICAL QUERIES

Dear The One...
I am a recent convert to your magazine and find it excellent value. I particularly enjoy the special features. I am upgrading my ST for an Amiga and I have a question. Because I am such a **Dungeon Master** freak 1Mb is essential, but I've heard that the odd game will not work with 1Mb fitted. What (if any) games work with only half a Mb? Can the expansion be easily interchanged?
David Pooley, North Walsham, Norfolk

It's true, there is the odd game that won't work with a 1Mb expansion fitted. But it's not a common problem nowadays, with only the more elderly software suffering from this form of memory, erm... thing. In fact, no-one here can remember the last time we had to remove our expansion to make software work. If anyone does know of any software that won't work with an expanded Amiga, don't hesitate to drop us a line.

At the moment I am putting together the money for an Amiga. This is an expensive investment, so I wanted to ask you a question. Are the quality of graphics worse on a normal TV? If so, does it spoil the game?
Ian Troake, Ashford, Middlesex

None of us here has a problem using a TV at home. The visual quality does suffer slightly, but not significantly.

WOT NO ENCYCLOPEDIA?

Dear The One
I purchased The One as normal. As soon as I got home I avidly searched the pages. And then I searched them again. No, it's definitely not there I thought. So I searched for a reason or apology. And again, and again... I'd nearly given up when, lo and behold, in a tiny corner of the contents page there it was! A reason. In fact, the only reason for the non-inclusion of the Encyclopedia Of 16-bit Games. Oh no! I thought, because I've enthusiastically been collecting it and filing it away each month. Perhaps a certain amount of organisation and tidiness comes with age (well, I am 34) because it really appealed to me. Yes, even the games I don't have were interesting.

Still, I thought, I'll persevere and see what the rest of this month's edition is like. Let's have a look at the disk, where's the instructions? Page Six. Oh no they're not! It's the Letters page. So where are the disk instructions? Guess! Page 10, which, according to the Contents, is actually the Letters page!

Oh well, can't get any worse now, let's have a look at the rest of the mag.

And I was right, it got very much better. I loved your Reviews, lots of pictures and meaningful captions giving a real insight into the games, and a good summary to boot (computer joke). Now, that's what reviewing is about!

Being old (bah!) I really enjoy simulations rather than 'shoot 'em/bash 'em/kick 'em to death ups' so I particularly liked the **4D Sports Boxing** Review/Feature, nice one Jim. Another thing I like about your Reviews and Features are the bits of potted history, a nice little touch. 4D Sports Boxing and **Wings** are particularly good examples of this.

I'm also impressed by the number of competitions included in this issue. I love entering competitions and you've included one with every Review. Brilliant!

Whilst I'm praising you like this I may as well mention that I was very interested in the look back over two years of The One (aah, nostalgia isn't what it was). It's good to look back at games you've reviewed over the years and compare memories of them with current games. Don't some of them age really badly whilst others survive the rigours of time so well (**Elite** must be the best example of the latter)?

All in all, what I initially thought was a disaster has turned into a triumph! Surely, in my humble opinion, your best issue to date. Keep up the good work!
Philip York, Mobberley, Cheshire

Shucks...

RELEASE REQUESTS

Dear The One...

When are **Indianapolis 500** and **688 Attack Sub** coming out for the Atari ST?
Lee, Stockport

The bad news is that Electronic Arts is not currently planning to release either of these titles for the ST. Indianapolis 500 is a bit more likely than 688 Attack Sub, but I wouldn't hold your breath.

QUESTION TIME

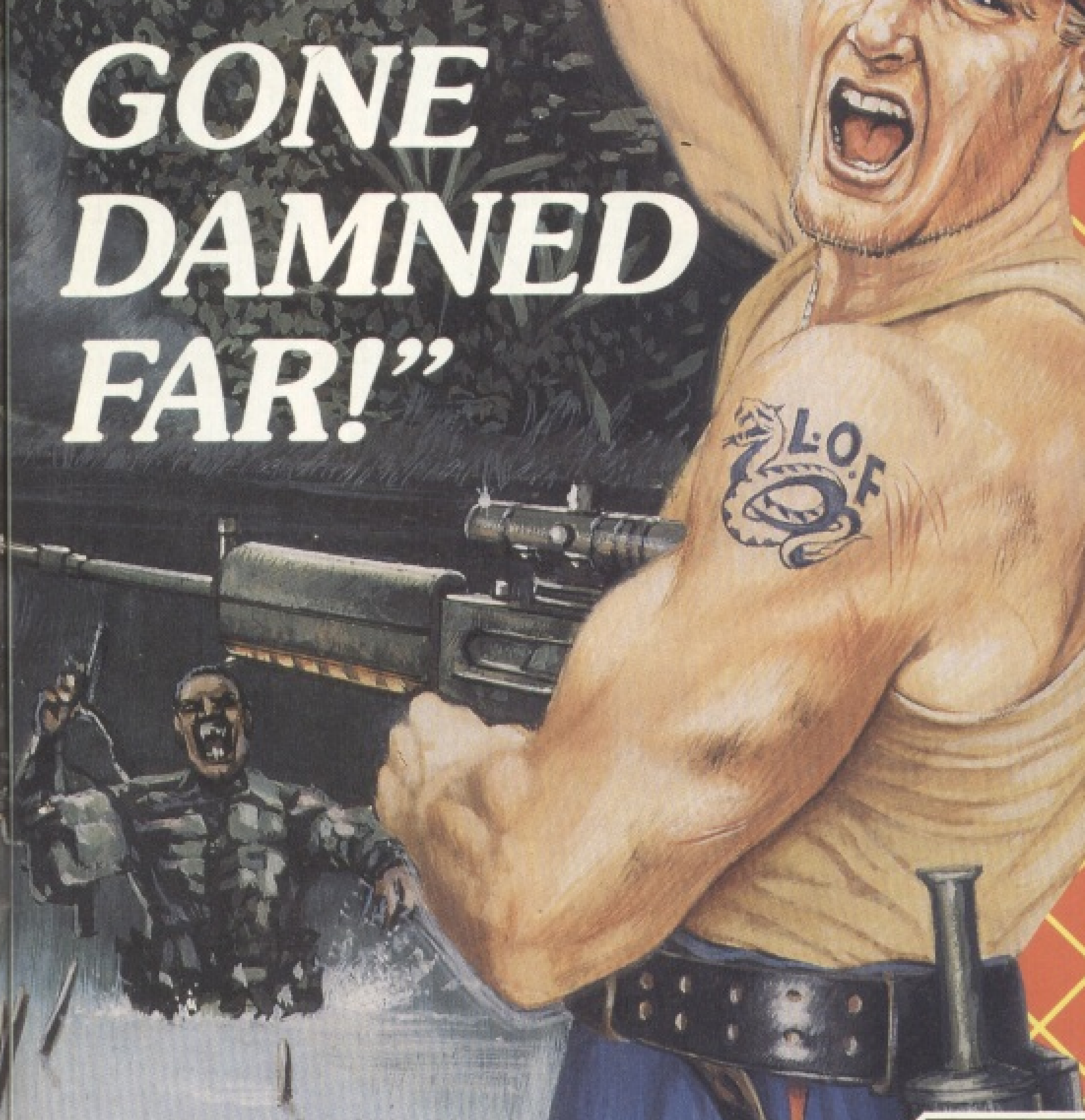
Dear The One
In Issue 25 Paul Beevis wrote in with a very good suggestion about a special page where people can write in and suggest ideas for new games. I thought this was an excellent idea because I'm always coming up with ideas for games. I write them down but I don't know what to do with them, which brings me onto my questions...
1) I have wanted to be a programmer for a few years now but don't know where to start. I would be grateful if you could advise me.
2) Are there any plans to convert any of the following games: **Wrestle War**, **WWF Superstars**, **The Main Event**, **Euro League**, **Super Monaco GP**, **WGP**, **Air Inferno** and **Prisoners Of War**?
3) Will you be doing a Work In Progress on **Golden Axe**?
4) Are the Quickshot Universal Infrared, Universal Arcade-Style, Deluxe Digital and the Quickjoy Jetfighter available for use on the Atari ST?
Danny Murdock, Catford, London

1) It's a sad situation but there's less new programming talent coming through now than there was a few years ago. Some programmers feel that the level of interest in programming is low because of the lack of the hobbyist enthusiasm that was so prominent in the '80s. Can anyone remember the joys of listings? Sure, most of the time they didn't work. But that was the appeal. You'd have to make the listing work, otherwise you'd have nothing to play. Unless, of course, you wrote something yourself. Anyway, as for becoming a professional programmer, Danny, that's mainly down to you. Obviously you need to learn how to program first, before you can begin to dish out demonstrations of your talent to software publishers. There's always our ShowCase section, which should be returning to these pages fairly soon. We also have a rather useful regular feature on design coming soon, so stay tuned and keep the ideas coming.
2) The only one out of that list that we know is being converted for sure is Super Monaco GP. US Gold has the licence and Probe is doing the conversion work. See this issue's News for further details.
3) Yes and no. Turn to page 73 for a full Review and plenty more besides!
4) There shouldn't be a compatibility problem with your ST and any of the joysticks you mention.

NOT MUSHROOM HERE...

I have just found out that **Super Mario III** is going to be released at Christmas and that it was a big hit in Japan. I am a real sucker for these jumping around and eating mushroom games, but I have one small problem. I do not have a Nintendo or GameBoy, I have an Atari ST 520. Will Nintendo ever do a conversion?
Barnaby Cleave, Bembridge, Isle Of Wight

Nope. Nintendo's like that, you see. It doesn't like to encourage people to play with machines other than its own, so it's likely that we will never ever see Super Mario on 16-bit. Still, there's a slim chance that someone, somewhere will produce a variation on the 'jumping around and eating mushroom' theme. Let's just hope it's not too similar to Mario's adventures, otherwise it won't ever see the light of day...



Use your Rapier machine gun to blast your way through enemy lines ... mega devastation with a single button.
The other operations were Sunday picnics compared with this one.
Getting in was tough – getting out alive will be damned near impossible!
Line of Fire – 'This time they've gone too damned far!'

Atari ST version



Atari ST version



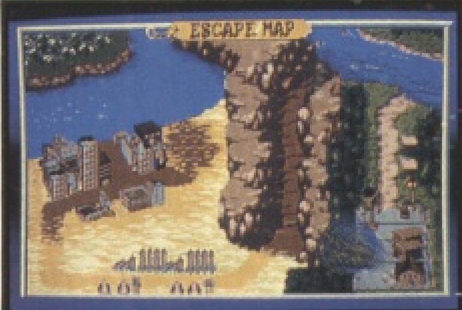
Amiga version



Atari ST version



Amiga version



Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.



d, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 625 3366.



IN A ROOM with a big purple pillar in it, a green robot trundles around, oblivious to your presence. These robots are called Reels, due to their distinctive cotton reel shape.

LOOKING UP at a bridge section. The little red blob peeking over the side of the ledge on the right is the top of the control post that extends the bridge.



UP ON THE LEDGE you can see the gap you literally have to bridge. But can you operate the controls of the bridge itself? You need more than brawn to solve some of these tricky puzzles.

PROJECT
Cybercon III

PUBLISHER
US Gold

AUTHOR
The Assembly Line
Ricardo M Pinto (Game & Graphic Design)
Andrew Beveridge (ST & Amiga Programming)
John Dale (Sound)

INITIATED
January 1990

RELEASE

AMIGA
January 1991

ATARI ST
January 1991

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
TBA

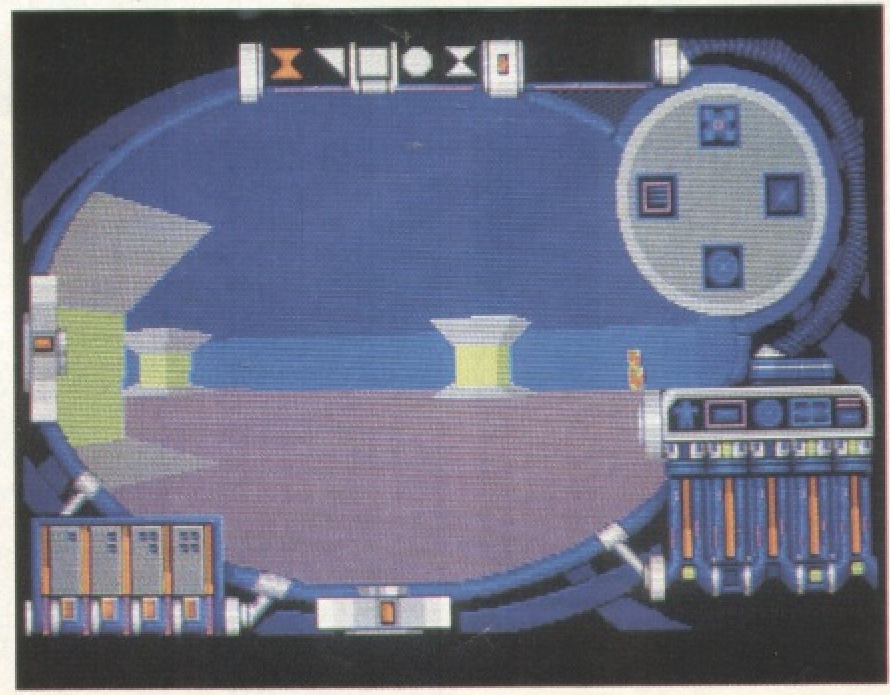
Cybercon III

(front elevation)

Fresh from its success with Vaxine, The Assembly Line's set to unleash another 3D product, only this time with an adventure bent. Phil South went to meet the men behind the magic.



A BLAST FROM your on-board weapons system bursts against a column. On top of the column you notice a broad collector of sorts, something like a light sensor. What could it be?



INSIDE YOUR HELMET you can see the weapons selector circle to the right, and above that at the top the controls for your sonic key. The small meters down at the bottom of the visor are your power indicators for the different suit systems.

THE ASSEMBLY LINE has rightly earned itself a nice little niche in the market for producing entertainment software that's a little bit out of the ordinary. The team's work ranges from all manner of conversions to masterworks of modern design of its own, such as **E-Motion** and more recently Vaxine.

The success of its original wares is impressive, especially when you consider that it's so hard to gain acknowledgement without a licence these days. And unless a computer entertainment is easily classifiable, it's not acceptable.

"It's terrible," bemoans John Dale. "You labour for months and months on something only for people to say it's too weird." Andy Beveridge adds: "For example, I was surprised to see **Loom** criticised for NOT being like an adventure."

Grievances aside, the design of this new project is being handled by newcomer to the team, Ricardo M Pinto. "The reason it's called **Cybercon III**," he explains, "is because calling it Cybercon One sounded a bit stupid. The idea is that you're trying to penetrate the defences of this computer system that's gone haywire and is killing everybody off. The makers built a sort of failsafe into it, and that is that they trained specific operatives to get into the system an disarm the defences. But now the computer's gone completely mad..."

John Dale adds with no small amount of irony: "So the fate of ▶



world rests in your hands. Either you shut it down, or it shuts the rest of the world down."

Although the complex housing the computer is impregnable, it has its flaws that enable you to enter... "It's got this huge force-field around it, it allows one operative, and he has to shut it down."

You see the world through the eyes of your power armour as you walk around the enormous rooms of the underground complex. But unlike many other adventures in the 3D mould, the spaces inside the Cybercon complex are truly vast. Although your power armour can protect you up to a point if you fall, there are some drops that not even power-assisted impact-resistant steel suits can save you from. As Ricardo put it: "The suit would be fine, but you'd be this sort of sludge in the legs of it."

Another point about Cybercon III is that everything moves so fast and looks so realistic. It's all so moody and dark – in fact the colours have been kept quite low to reinforce that feel. It's a game of cinematic techniques and hi-tech 3D shapes, but as you move around, the world doesn't just sit there. No, the robots and devices in the complex are all very much alive. Even when you can't see the complex in action, things are moving around and changing.

Cybercon III is being programmed by Andy Beveridge using a special 3D environment he's created. Andy is no stranger to 3D, having joined TAL after many years with Realtime, the team famous for its 3D exploits on computers like the Sinclair Spectrum. Although Andy's 3D experience is great, Ricardo's isn't so lean either, with his time at a firm called Torus being the programmer behind the Z80 versions of **Elite** and another famous little number called **Gyron**, as well as being one of the original designers behind **Carrier Command**. (As a point of interest, Ricardo shares a house with another 3D expert, Sandy White, writer of the 8-bit classic **Ant Attack** and the never-to-be-released 16-bit 'adventure' **Dick Special**).

TAL admires Ricardo's design for the way it dictates that things should keep moving, even when the player is standing still. "This is one of the things that interested me when we first saw it," reveals John Dale. "There are other 3D games where the world is essentially passive. You just trot round and find things, whereas here we're talking about a world where there's quite a bit going on. It's a lot more interactive."

"It has grown a bit since our original intentions," Andy chips in at this point. "There was a stage where we had the system and we didn't know what to do with it. We just weren't quite sure. Ricardo saw it, and he said 'That looks like a really boring conference centre!' I was quite hurt actually."

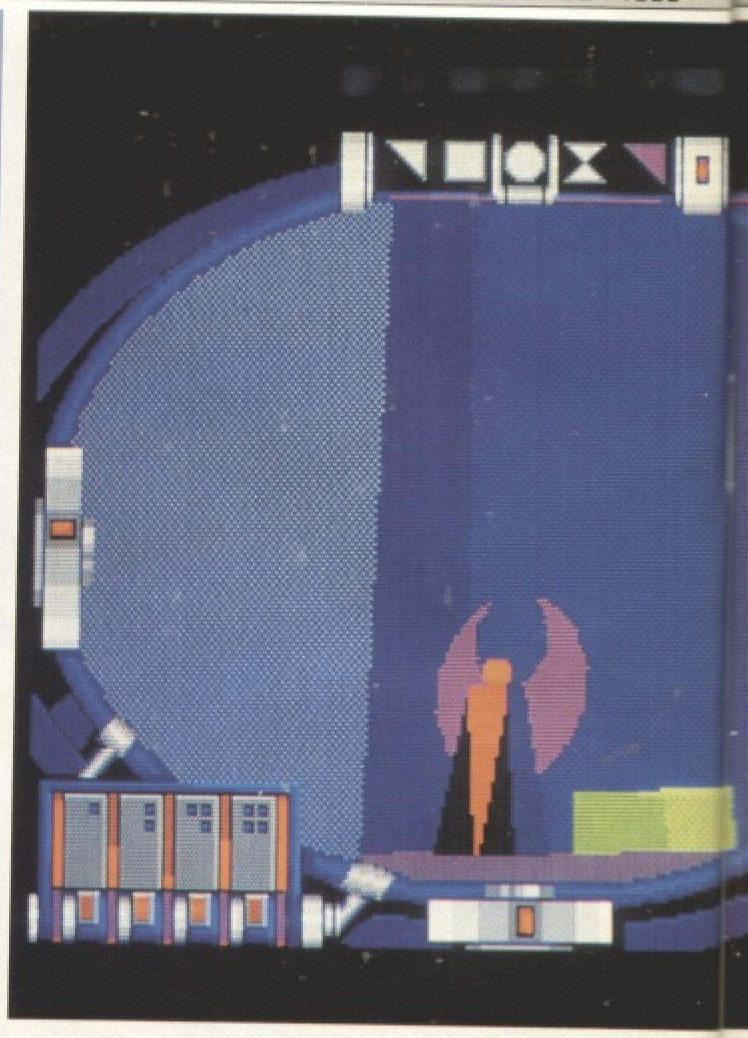
So, having to defend his stance, Ricardo told them that he could design a much more impressive experience using this brilliant new system. Andy and Ricardo had worked on a huge 3D game which never came out called **EPT** (see the Realtime WIP in Issue 20), so he believed it when Ricardo said he had a decent design.

THE SCENARIO

ONCE UPON A TIME Cybercon was a supreme computer, controlling all our defences. But over the years the machine got so complex it took on a quasi-human intelligence, and the power drove it mad. It bombed the hell out of most of the humans on Earth, leaving a handful of rebels. The remaining humans on the Earth after Cybercon goes mad find themselves with the unenviable task of entering the complex to stop the machine from wiping us out completely. Ricardo's plot had to have a loophole so that the rebels could destroy the computer, or at least have a chance.

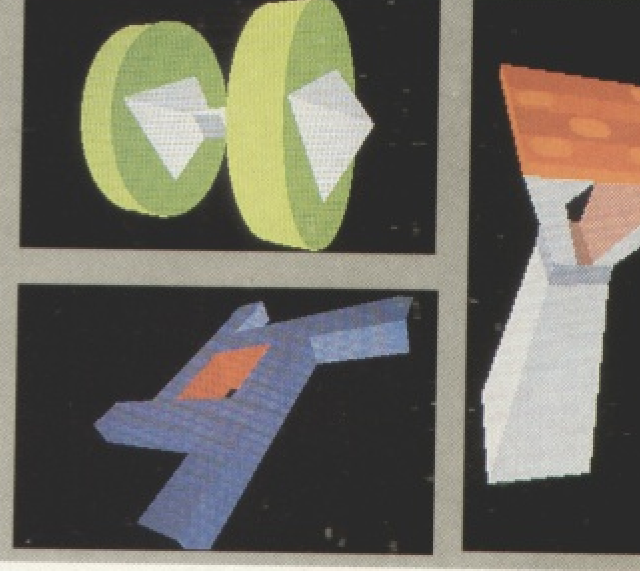
"Cybercon actually has a blind spot," he says when pressed on this subject. "So they knocked up this power armour suit. They've been fighting this thing for decades and there's very little left of them. They're on the verge of death, because Cybercon has decided to exterminate them, and so they dig up this old suit of power armour with extra weapons and extra power cells. One of the great features of this power armour is that it was built and designed at the same time as the system. So they suspect that they'll be able to take on energy and so on once inside. All its interfaces are compatible with Cybercon. The armour allows you to do various things, like power-aided jumps, push very heavy objects, and so on."

The rebels, it appears, have correctly surmised that Cybercon has a weak spot, but what they don't know is that Cybercon knows about it, and is trying to do something about it. The computer has created a force to thwart you inside the computer centre, so as well as you and the automatic robots in the complex, something else, something more sinister, is roaming around looking for YOU.





INSIDE THE ENORMOUS entrance of the centre, lit by eerie green lights. Behind you is the force-field that has just allowed you (and only you) inside the complex. Ahead lies the double-door entrance, as tall as a man, which gives you some idea of the size of the room.



A COLLECTION of objects from the Cybercon III program. The TAL object editor allows the user to load and view any of the objects in the system and turn them around for inspection and redrawing purposes. Notice the very round objects like the wheels of the Reel and the wings of the Guardian Angel.



HERE'S ANOTHER BRIDGE, this time a static one, extending over a deep chasm. Over on the right-hand side, at the far end of the ledge, you can see a door. This is clearly the only way to get up to the next level, but watch your step.

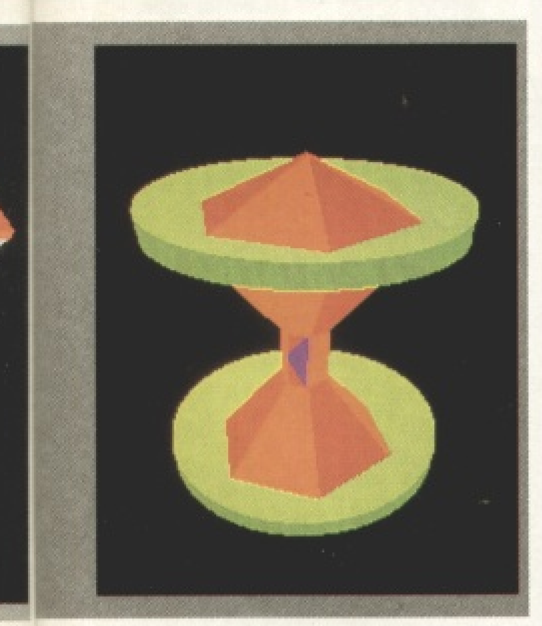
SOUND CONSIDERATIONS

THE USE OF SOUND in Cybercon III is also impressive. There are noises for the doors as they swish open and noises for robots moving and shooting. The little sonic key you have with you has sounds to aid you when opening doors and activating objects in the complex. That said, there will be some more exotic sounds in the finished product. In the version currently running at TAL, the sounds were those of a touch-tone phone.

In most cases the sounds are sampled, as the STE and Amiga can handle running the samples without slowing down the action. But shoehorning samples into more standard STs was a bit of a trial according to John. "There'll have to be judicious use of sound in the ST versions, chip sound probably. It's hard to know sometimes what to and what not to support in the games, really, but I suppose it'll be a lot easier once there's a few more STEs out there."



A GUARDIAN ANGEL stands between you and the solution to a puzzle. The Angels are the most complex shapes that TAL's 3D system has produced.





THE CYBERCON III TEAM... From left to right, Ricardo Pinto, John Dale, and Andy Beveridge.

THE FUTURE

AT PRESENT the team is working on the all-important PC version of **Team Yankee** (see Issue 26) for Empire, plus the ST and Amiga arcade conversions of **Exterminator** for Audiogenic (see News). Plus, depending on how Cybercon III is received, a sequel is in the offing, although the team's a bit shy about the details on that one. And after all that? Well, the boys have worked hard during their first year together, and together they look forward to a time when they can choose the projects they want to carry their name. Judging from the quality of their catalogue so far, they shouldn't have to wait long for that.

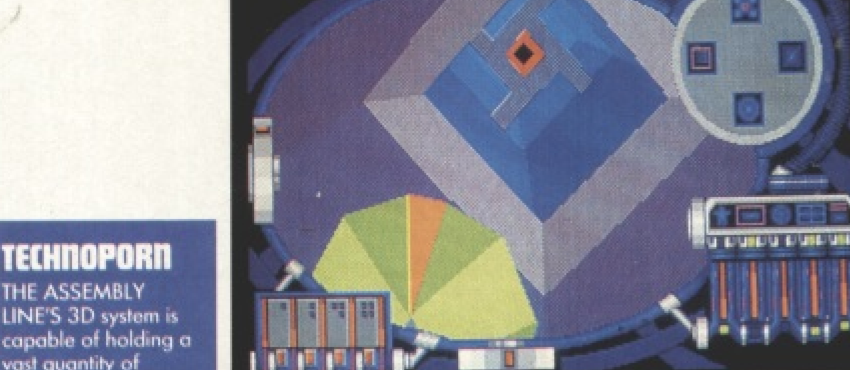
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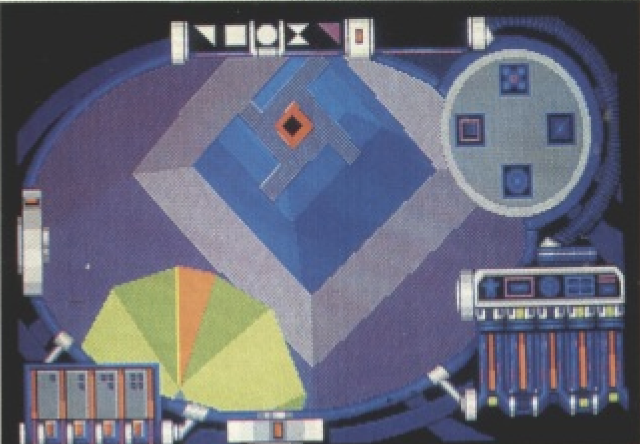
THE ASSEMBLY LINE'S 3D system is capable of holding a vast quantity of information on objects, rooms and animation. It isn't actually known how many polygons there are in Cybercon III, as it varies depending on how many doors you have open, and things like that. The average frame rate of the animations are between eight and 25 frames per second, but once again this depends on which room and where...

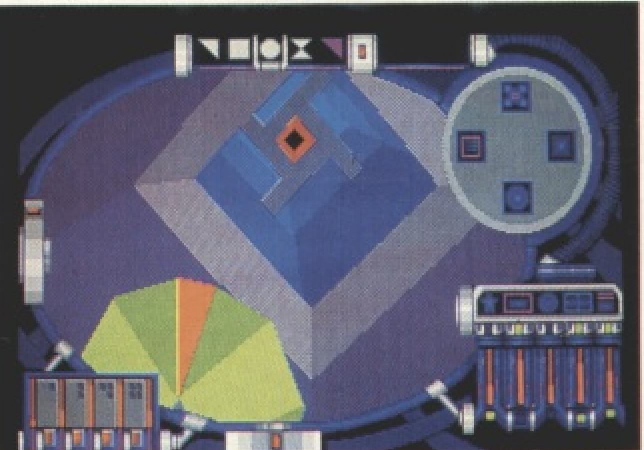
But, as an example, here are two typical rooms: the 'simple' room has 40 polygons, 144 points and runs at 15 FPS. The most complex room example has 180 polygons, 403 points and runs at eight FPS.

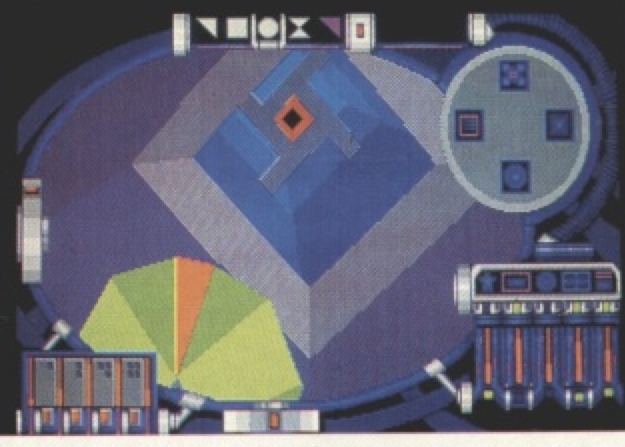
One of the system's most innovative aspects is the way it draws circles, a specific innovation created by Adrian Stephens (who is, you may remember, the programmer of ImageWorks' **Interphase**.

Cybercon III has over 270,000 lines of source code and takes up over 2.5Mb of memory on Andy's PC. To give you some idea of how much text this is, it's the equivalent of five regular-sized novels of about 70-80,000 words!

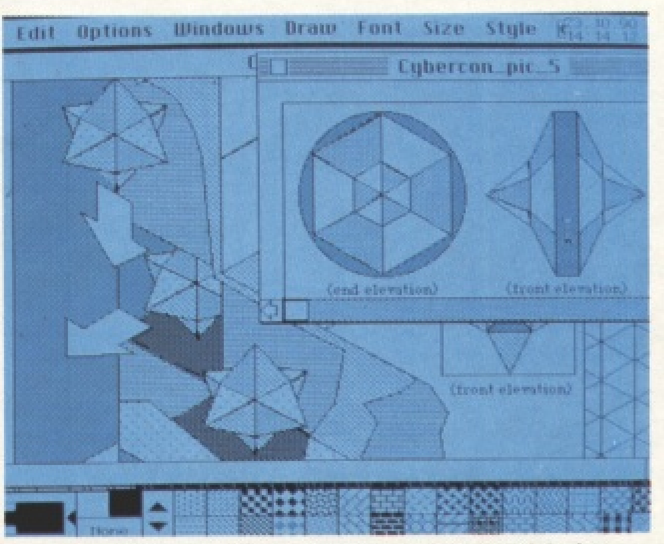








LOOKING UP one of the enormous shafts inside the centre, past a spinning disc, up into the tower top. The tower top comprises four intersecting tunnels. You can get to them by solving the puzzles in other rooms on the way up there. Don't fall, or you end up as a bucket of sludge in your boots.



BEING A FLASH sort of fella, Ricardo did all the initial designs for Cybercon III on his Apple Macintosh. From here he went onto create the designs for the machines and rooms on graph paper, so that data for the system could be created.

It wasn't. All Ricardo had in fact was a smart idea which had been waiting around for something like the TAL 3D system to come along. Even so, the design was honed very quickly into something which even Andy found quite startling – and he'd built the system.

"We liked the design because Ricardo assured me that I wouldn't have to do any more work at all. It was already written."

"I was amazed at the way the appearance changed," he says. "I was defining objects and rooms, but my idea of a room was basically a box. Some of things we've done with rooms are amazing."

Ricardo tried to influence the team to think bigger too: "I mean, the conference centre was quite small, but I wanted to make everything, every room, as gigantic as possible. I'm expanding it all the time."

Andy adds: "But unfortunately everything can't get any bigger now, because we're running out of memory."

How big is the program at this stage then? Andy taps the keyboard on his PC... "270,000 lines. We compact it down a bit, but there's 30,000 lines for data alone!

Ricardo gets very excited about all the rooms he's designed: "There are 300-odd rooms, great big towers and big, deep chasms. And when I say there are 300 rooms, there are 300 actual different-looking rooms, not just 300 different boxes you can be in. For example, there's great big towers you can be in and look up and see a walkway going across. Then later in the game you'll walk across that walkway and look down on where you were. It's nice to able to use height like that, but it's enormously complicated. There's one section which is just a maze of passages and..."

Andy sighs before adding: "Which is very confusing to debug, I can tell you. Mind you, my thinking in 2D has got us into problems before now. Thinking of object tactics and how things attack other things... I was thinking in a flat plane around the player. And when Ricardo explains what he wants some of the objects to do, I find they've got to come at you from above, below, sweep down from the ceiling... It's just never occurred to me that there's all this space for flying objects."

Andy is also incredibly proud of the system, and what it can do. "You can push things. Sounds silly, but it's very fiddly to do. You can push things off edges – you can push things through doorways even! And the whole complex runs all the time. Just because you can't see a room, it doesn't mean that it's not running."

The trick is that Andy has built the system so that it tells the program what is visible from your viewpoint, say, through a door into another one. But the system has to be smarter than that. "Speed is a problem. If you go through leaving doors open, I have to know whether you can see through these doors. If you go down a corridor and leave all the doors open behind you, and then look back you can see from one room into the next, and the next, and the next... I do actually draw all those things and I have to work out if you can actually see them. And the game does slow down, particularly when there's a lot of towers with rooms off them. I have to consider everything in all the rooms."

It's a man's life programming 3D adventures... ●

+ + + CYBERCON III + + +

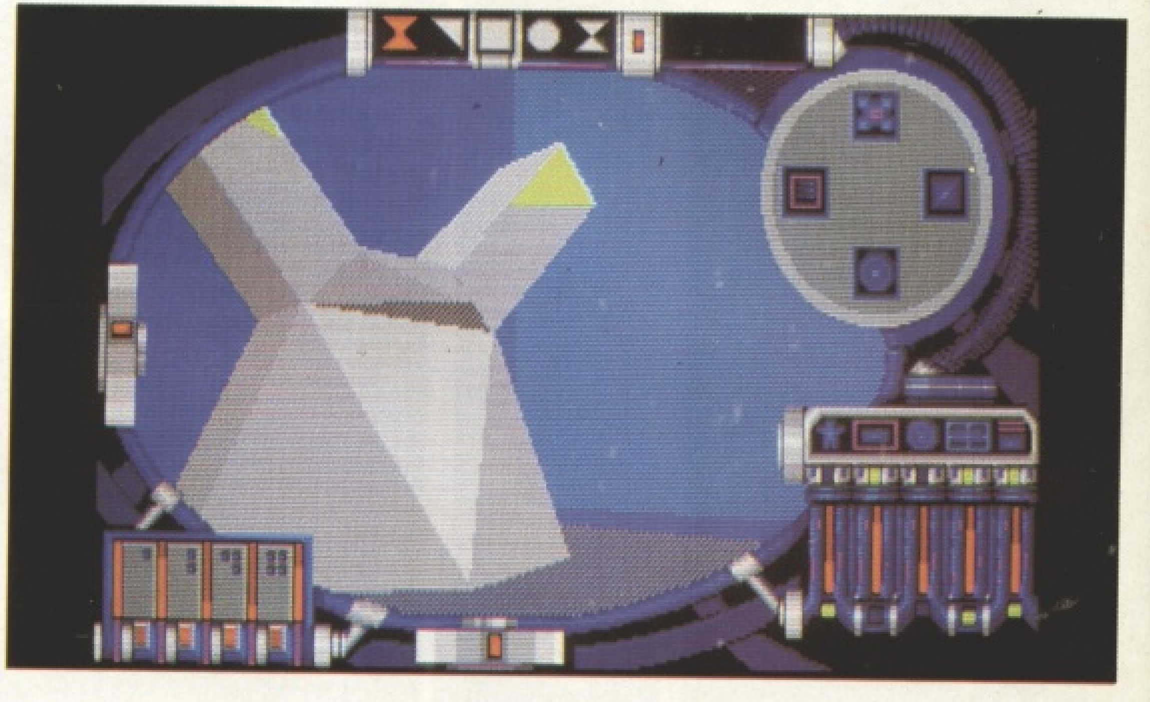
READ IT? NOW PLAY IT!

THE COVER-MOUNTED playable preview represents a fraction of what will be found in the Real Thing. We have provided you with a simplistic puzzle to get you started. And all without the hassle of any adversaries to worry about... yet.

The Cybercon III preview effectively comes in two parts. To get to the second part you have to complete the first.

Part One involves a simplistic puzzle of sorts. All you have to do is explore the complex and find three pieces of a 'key' to enter Part Two.

Part Two sees you sat inside the Master Control Room, allowing you to call up camera views of the complex you have just explored. If you do manage to get this far, use the number keys from one to zero to access the cameras, then use the joystick to control the camera view.



WHAT YOU GET

"This Cybercon III preview has been designed basically to compliment the Work In Progress – to give you a feel for how the environment works, what you can expect to see and so on," explains designer Ricardo Pinto.

As you'd expect with Cybercon III still in production, there's a lot missing from this preview that will appear in the finished article, There's no combat implemented as yet, the robots have no artificial intelligence, and collectable objects are at a minimum.

And, as Ricardo puts it: "there are also a lot of elements that we've not included because we want them to be a surprise." The idea is simply to explore and complete the mini-task that's been set.

Our Cybercon III preview features around 20 rooms - that's about a 20th of the size of the Real Thing. Certain rooms have been 'lifted' from The Assembly Line's work to date, but they have been put together in such a way that you won't actually see anything exactly like this in the finished product.

As for the second part of the preview, where you can play around with the cameras... this represents a feature of Cybercon III where you can place cameras to monitor the movements of robots around the complex. Since you can't manipulate objects, the cameras here are already set and in place.

CONTROLS

Movement and the like is mainly via a joystick (to be inserted in the port where the mouse doesn't go), although some keyboard input is required.

PLUS!

A quick stab of the firebutton shoots your Plasma Cannon (but only if it's turned on!). Hold down the firebutton while moving to charge up the Power Armour for a jump. Release the firebutton to execute the jump. Hold down and release **J** to perform a stationary jump. The longer the key is depressed, the higher the jump when the key is released. Please note that holding down the 'J' key for too long results in a crouch, not a jump.

WITHOUT FIREBUTTON DEPRESSED

WALK FORWARD
TURN LEFT — TURN RIGHT
WALK BACK

WITH FIREBUTTON DEPRESSED



LOOK UP
SHUFFLE LEFT — SHUFFLE RIGHT
LOOK DOWN

THE SONIC KEY

This handy little device is used to activate doors, lifts and the like. It works by 'loading' it with symbols before turning it on. When it comes to making it work, these are the key to please...

< Slide Key Symbols Left

> Slide Key Symbols Right

SPACE Load Sonic Key With Highlighted Symbol

RETURN Play Sonic Key

SYSTEMS

The four cursor keys are used to select and activate the Power Armour's five systems. Please note that for the purposes of this preview, the systems are not fully functional. For example, extra weaponry has yet to implemented.

SYSTEM ON-OFF TOGGLE
MOVE SYSTEM HIGHLIGHT LEFT — MOVE SYSTEM HIGHLIGHT RIGHT
INITIATE AUTO-REPAIR ON SYSTEM
(AUTO-REPAIR MUST BE ACTIVATED FIRST!)

THE OBJECT TESTER

This forms part of The Assembly Line's debugging tools for Cybercon III. It has been implemented here to give you a feel for the shapes used to build up the playfield. Movement of the object is down to pretty much the same joystick control as used during play. Here are a few extra keys to keep you happy...

SHIFT + UNDO Enter Tester (Atari ST)

SHIFT + DEL Enter Tester (Amiga)

N Next Object

P Previous Object

CURSOR KEYS Move Object

ESC Exit Editor

THE PALETTE

Another part of The Assembly Line's debugging tools includes this palette check. It's used by the boys to double check which colours are being used throughout. Notice the used of stipples to gain extra colours from the existing ones. Please note that the palette is not visible on the Amiga.

SHIFT + HELP View Palette

ESC Exit Palette

SOUND

A few sounds have been incorporated within this preview. To allow The Assembly Line to check on the samples at any time during play, this handy little feature is included...

SHIFT + Z Play Next Sound Sample

LOADING AMIGA AND ATARI ST

Loading your Cybercon III preview couldn't be easier. Much. Simply insert the disk into the internal drive and turn on the power. The Cybercon III preview will now load and run automatically.

LOADING PROBLEMS

Should you find that your Cybercon III preview won't load, remove any extraneous external peripherals, such as printers, and try again. If the disk still refuses to load, it's probably faulty.

FAULTY DISKS

If you find that your Cybercon III preview disk refuses to load, simply pop it into a jiffy bag or padded envelope and send it, along with your name and address, to: THE ONE CYBERCON III REPLACEMENTS, Stanley Precision Data Systems Ltd, Unit F, Cavendish Courtyard, Sallow Road, Weldon North Industrial Estate, Corby, Northants NN17 1JX. Please allow 28 days for a new disk to arrive at your door.

SOME ADVICE...

Make a map. Not only will it aid you exploration, it will give you plenty of practice for the 300 or so rooms to be found in the Real Thing.

DON'T shoot the security cameras!

STUCK? Tough. Well, it is until the next issue where we will provide you with a complete solution.

4D SPORTS DRIVING

Do you want to drive in the Fourth Dimension?



SPACEMATIC heat resistant EXIT

From DSI, the creators of Test Drive™ and The Duel: Test Drive II™

Mindscape and award winning developers DSI bring a new era of games to your home computer with the 4D Sports series. Here the 4th Dimension is realism and the action is amazingly real.

4D Sports Driving lets you loose on the most amazing test track ever built in the fastest and best cars the world's motor industry have ever created. This is the ultimate proving ground where you can test these super cars to destruction - literally!

Take your pick from cars like Porsche, Ferrari or Lambourghini and put them through their paces on stunts including the nerve-rackin' 360° loop the loop, jumps, the topsy-turvey tunnels and the heart stoppin' pipe!

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IBM PC & Compatibles. CGA, EGA, VGA/256 or Tandy graphics. Roland, Soundblaster or Adlib sound cards. Amiga and Atari ST available January 1991.

TOP TEN

Month Ending November 1990
AMIGA

1	NE	**M1 TANK PLATOON** MicroProse
2	NE	**SUPREMECY** Virgin Games
3	NE	**F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER** MicroProse
4	NE	**LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO** Gremlin
5	NE	**CAPTIVE** Mindscape
6	NE	**CADAVER** Image Works
7	▼	**WINGS** Cinemaware And Microsoft
8	►	**KICK OFF 2** Anco
9	▼	**THE KILLING GAME SHOW** Psygnosis
10	NE	**INIDANAPOLIS 500** Electronic Arts

Compiled by Software Circus Ltd, The Plaza, 120 Oxford Street, London W1N 9DP. Tel: (071) 436 2811.

TOP TEN

One Year Ago
AMIGA

1	**BATMAN: THE MOVIE** Ocean
2	**SWORDS OF TWILIGHT** Electronic Arts
3	**SHADOW OF THE BEAST** Psygnosis
4	**XENON 2: MEGABLAST** Image Works
5	**THE GAMES: SUMMER EDITION** Epyx And US Gold
6	**CONTINENTAL CIRCUS** The Sales Curve And Virgin Games
7	**LASER SQUAD** Blade
8	**F-16 COMBAT PILOT** Digital Integration
9	**STRIDER** US Gold
10	**THE DUEL: TEST DRIVE II** Accolade

TOP TEN

Germany
AMIGA

1	**THE LEGEND OF FAERGHAIL** ReLine
2	**INVEST** Starbyte
3	**KLAX** Domark
4	**SIM CITY** Infogrames
5	**WINGS** Cinemaware
6	**EMLYN HUGHES SOCCER** Audiogenic
7	**KICK OFF 2** Anco
8	**SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2** Psygnosis
9	**SHADOW WARRIORS** Ocean
10	**LOST PATROL** Ocean

Thanks to Aktueller Software Markt.

MORE THAN FIT FOR A PRINCE

REMEMBER the tales of the Arabian Knights? Domark and its American affiliate Broderbund have got one to beat them all for release next month.

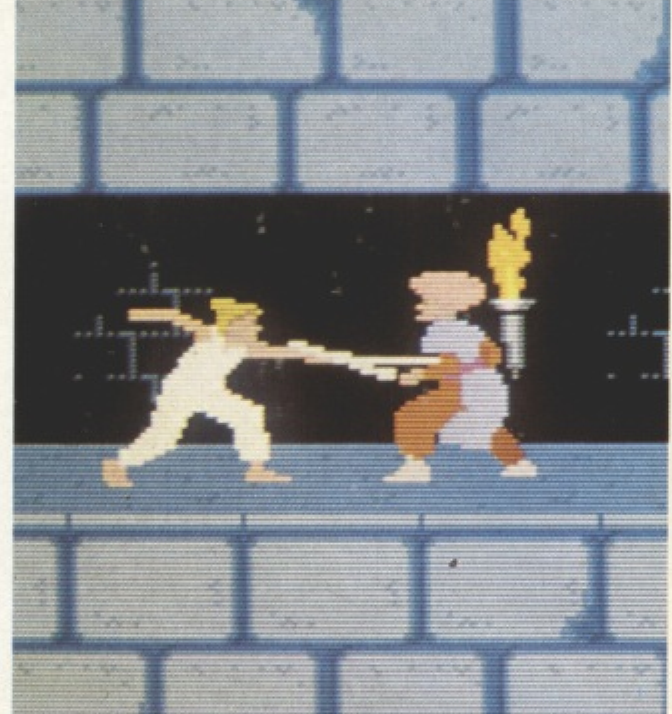
Prince Of Persia, which arrived unexpectedly on Domark's doorstep just a few weeks ago, is a sprawling arcade adventure set long ago in the Far East, when turned-up pointy slippers were all the rage, and heroes rescued princesses from the hands of dastardly tyrants in the nick of time.

Which, by a startling coincidence, is exactly what happens here. With the all-powerful Sultan away from home fighting, the evil Grand Vizier Jaffar has seized control of the land, enslaved the people and taken up residence in the Sultan's castle home. Worse still, he's taken a liking to the Sultan's beautiful daughter and plans to marry her – but only if she accepts. Jaffar has given the young princess a simple choice – accept his proposal within the hour, or die. So now it's up to you, a young peasant jailed in Jaffar's castle dungeons, to escape and rescue the Princess before her time is up.

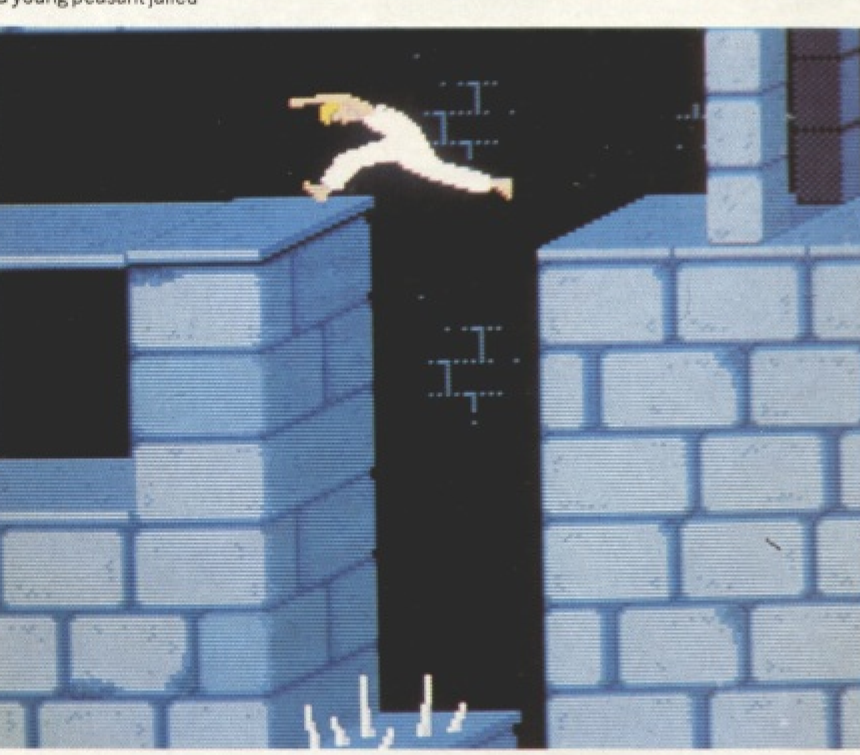
Prince Of Persia features 12 sprawling levels – each a part of the mammoth castle – interspersed by mini-movie sequences that advance the story as you go along. The emphasis is as much on puzzle-solving as arcade action, with almost every screen laden with tricks, traps and surprises. To make matters tougher, an army of sword-wielding warriors, both alive and undead, stand between you and your true love.

But what's attracted most attention to Prince Of Persia since its recent release Stateside is the versatility of the main character and the way in which his gymnastics are presented. Prince Of Persia's creator, Jordan Mechner (who is best known for Broderbund's ageing martial arts classic **Karateka**), spent hours studying footage of '30s swashbuckling movies, and even staged his own mock swordfights in order to achieve as realistic effect as possible. The result is nothing short of stunning as the hero runs, jumps, crawls, climbs – and dies – with remarkable realism.

Domark hopes to have Amiga, ST and PC incarnations packaged and on sale in time for Christmas, at prices yet to be announced. However, if you simply can't wait, American copies are already available over here on import through Software Circus (071 436 2811), at a price of £24.99. There's a full review of Prince Of Persia next month.



SWORDFIGHTING is an essential skill, what with steel-wielding guards in abundance waiting to turn you into Shish Kebab.



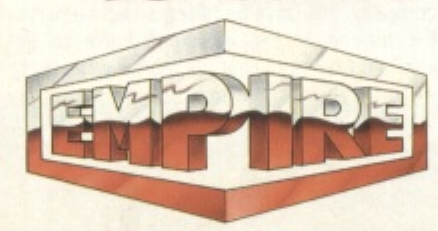
RICKETY PLATFORMS crumble between your feet with little warning. Only the quick-footed will survive. There's also many a portcullis to activate – provided you can activate the relevant switch.



IN ONE OF THE inter-level mini-movie sequences the Princess lies helpless with less than 60 minutes to live – unless you can get there in time.

Gazza II

THE ULTIMATE SOCCER CHALLENGE IS ABOUT TO ...KICK OFF!!



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TOP TEN

Month Ending November 1990
ATARI ST

1	NE	**HERO'S QUEST** Sierra
2	▲	**CADAVER** Image Works
3	NE	**THE IMMORTAL** Electronic Arts
4	▼	**SHADOW OF THE BEAST** Psygnosis
5	▲	**KICK OFF 2** Anco
6	NE	**CAPTIVE** Mindscape
7	▼	**OPERATION STEALTH** Delphine And US Gold
8	NE	**NITRO** Psygnosis
9	NE	**F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER** MicroProse
10	NE	**DEBUT** Pandora

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TOP TEN

France
ATARI ST

1	**SHADOW OF THE BEAST** Psygnosis
2	**GOLD OF THE AZTECS** US Gold
3	**NIGHTBREED** Ocean
4	**SLY SPY SECRET AGENT** Ocean
5	**SHADOW WARRIORS** Ocean
6	**LEGEND OF FAERGHAIL** Rainbow Arts
7	**SNOWSTRIKE** US Gold
8	**OPERATION STEALTH** Delphine
9	**LE MONDE DES MERVEILLES** Ocean
10	**MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE** Ocean

Thanks To Micromania, France.

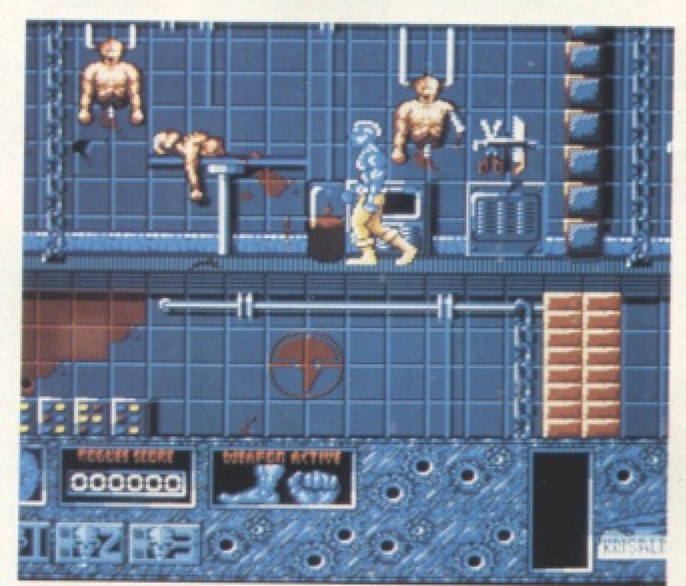
TOP TEN

One Year Ago
ATARI ST

1	**TV SPORTS FOOTBALL** Cinemaware And Mirrorsoft
2	**XENON 2: MEGABLAST** Image Works
3	**STUNT CAR RACER** MicroStyle
4	**STRIDER** US Gold
5	**F-16 COMBAT PILOT** Digital Integration
6	**ALTERED BEAST** Activision
7	**THE GAMES: SUMMER EDITION** Epyx And US Gold
8	**INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE: THE GRAPHIC ADVENTURE** Lucasfilm Games And US Gold
9	**LASER SQUAD** Blade
10	**CONTINENTAL CIRCUS** The sales Curve And Virgin Games

SUPER TROOPER

ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR heroes from 2000 AD **has at last made the transition to home computer screens. And he may yet star on the silver screen too!**



ROGUE COMES across some rather unfortunate victims of Nort experimentation. Let's hope he doesn't end up the same way.

As we reported back in Issue 24, Krisalis is the company responsible for bringing **Rogue Trooper** to the Amiga and Atari ST. The cost for the blue boy's binary battles is £24.99.

Rogue Trooper began life in the pages of 2000 AD back in 1981 in Prog 228. And the blue-skinned, genetically engineered soldier has been out to avenge the betrayal of all his fellow soldiers ever since. In fact, he's accompanied by the brain patterns of three of his dead buddies — namely Gunnar, Helm, and Bagman — in the form of 'bio-chips'.

"Rogue Trooper was created by myself and Gerry Finley-Day, in conference with Steve McManus," explains artist/writer Dave Gibbons. "This sounds like a terrible Hollywood thing: 'From a lunch with Bill Brown...' We got together and thrashed the whole concept out. A reader's survey has shown that what the readers of 2000 AD wanted was a future wars story. Initially Gerry wrote it and I drew it, but very recently the character has been revamped. I've written it, and another artist called Will Simpson has drawn it.

"The new Rogue is a little different. The artwork has changed substantially because 2000 AD is now full colour, so it has to be painted rather than line artwork. It gives it a lot more depth."

Rogue has survived 42 stories since his inception and is about to begin a new series written by Mike Fleischer and drawn by Ron Smith.

In the computer story you play Rogue, but you begin without your bio-chips. Level One is platform-orientated and has you rescuing your three bio-chip buddies before identifying the general who betrayed the Genetic Infantry. The second level concerns a flight over enemy territory, *a la* **Space Harrier**, while in Levels Three and Four you have to survive a DreamGas attack and attempt to get through to Souther High Command.



THAT WAS THEN.... Rogue Trooper, as scripted by Gerry Finley-Day and illustrated by Dave Gibbons.





YOUR BIO-CHIP buddies are rescued and you found a ship. But can you fly it? Space Harrier skills come in handy for this section.



AND THIS IS NOW... Still blue, only written by Dave Gibbons and drawn by Will Simpson.

It has been nearly two years since Krisalis acquired the license to Rogue Trooper, and since then the programmers have been in close contact with Dave Gibbons — although he hasn't had any artistic input. "They used a piece of artwork that I had done for a collection of the earlier Rogue Trooper stories," Dave adds. "That was also used by Games Workshop on the Role Playing game which they did.

"I think that Krisalis has made a good effort to keep it all authentic, right down to the packaging, with that really nifty little collectors' item comic-book. The comic-book has the first two stories, containing most of the artwork I did."

Rogue fans will also be pleased to know that a Rogue Trooper movie is in pre-production: "I believe the screen play has been written," Dave tells us.

The film rights are owned by Harley Copeley, who is currently talking to a certain large movie company. Will Dave be taking an active part in the making of the movie? "I'd like to get involved," he says, "but it's a bit like having to watch your children being publicly dismembered. And of course they're bound to stick the love interest and the dog in there somewhere!" ●

DOUBLE DARE YOU.

Blue Max

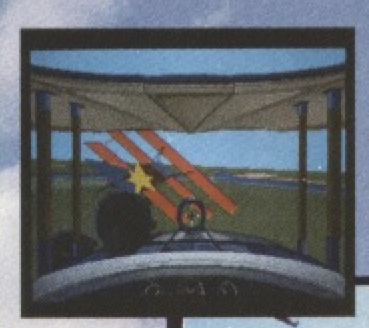
ACES OF THE GREAT WAR

WWI Air Combat Simulation

Take control of one of eight classic WWI fighters and find out how good you really are. Fly with the best—Richthofen, Fonck, Mannock, Rickenbacher—and learn their tricks and techniques.

- Action dogfight, solo, and team missions for one or two players using a single computer with any combination of keyboard, joystick, or mouse.
- Strategy Dogfight: For the skilled purist, Blue Max acts like a highly-intelligent strategic board game, allowing you and your opponent to work out detailed battle sequences and play back the moves in "realtime" 3D.
- 8 airplanes to choose from, each with its own highly-detailed flying characteristics.
- Perform missions with, as, or against the Aces of the Great War.
- Dozens of historical missions around 4 different locations within France.

How strong are your nerves at 2,000 feet, with an armed Fokker DR.I on your tail? Forget glory, friend. Think survival.



VGA color air combat sequence

Strategy mode split-screen with 3D Hexboard

- VGA 256 3D COLOR GRAPHICS,
- ORIGINAL MUSIC, SOUND EFFECTS FOR GAME BLASTER, ADLIB SYNTHESIZER CARDS

DAS BOOT

GERMAN U-BOAT SIMULATION

Winter, 1941. The icy waters of the North Atlantic. The deeper you dive, the greater the pressure. Depth charges explode around you, banging on the hull of your U-boat like iron fists. Nerve and cunning make you the terror of the Allied convoys.

- 3D submarine warfare: For the first time, a sub warfare game lets you deal with threats below *and* above the surface in a true three dimensional environment.
- Real communications: Use the German Enigma coding machine to send and receive information.
- Many missions to choose from—into the North Atlantic and Arctic, inland along the coast of Norway, into the Bay of Biscay, and through the Straits of Gibralter.
- 3 different levels of difficulty, from beginner to realistic.
- 3D graphics in 256 VGA colors, with multiple internal *and* external camera views in a complete 3D world.

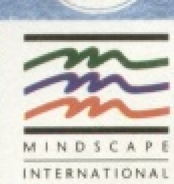
Do you think well under pressure? How about 300 pounds per square inch of pressure? Take a deep breath, captain....



VGA periscope view of enemy aircraft



VGA 256 color mine field under North Atlantic



M I N D S C A P E

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For further information on Mindscape products and new releases please call: 0898 234214

TOP TEN

Month Ending November 1990

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

1	▶	**FUTURE WARS: TIME TRAVELLERS** Delphine And US Gold
2	▶	**SILENT SERVICE II** MicroProse
3	▲	**STAR CONTROL** Accolade
4	NE	**RAILROAD TYCOON** MicroProse
5	NE	**MEAN STREETS** Access And US Gold
6	▼	**PGA TOUR GOLF** Electronic Arts
7	▼	**INDIANAPOLIS** Electronic Arts
8	▲	**TRACON II** Wesson And Mindscape
9	▼	**CRIME WAVE** Access And US Gold
10	NE	**MIDWINTER** Rainbird

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TOP TEN

USA

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

1	**COUNTDOWN** Access
2	**WING COMMANDER** Origin
3	**M1 TANK PLATOON** MicroProse
4	**STRATEGO** Accolade
5	**ALTERED DESTINY** Accolade
6	**A10 TANK KILLER** Dynamix
7	**STELLAR 7** Dynamix
8	**FIRE HAWK** Sierra On-Line
9	**STUNT DRIVER** Spectrum HoloByte
10	**SILENT SERVICE II** MicroProse

Thanks To Login Magazine, Japan.

TOP TEN

One Year Ago

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

1	**JETFIGHTER** Velocity
2	**SIM CITY** Maxis And Infogrames
3	**SPACE QUEST III** Sierra And Activision
4	**THE DUEL: TEST DRIVE II** Accolade
5	**STARGLIDER 2** Rainbird
6	**THE CYCLES** Accolade
7	**688 ATTACK SUB** Electronic Arts
8	**CHESSMASTER 2100** Mindscape
9	**M1 TANK PLATOON** MicroProse
10	**UFO** SubLogic

ROUNDABOUT RELEASE

PLAYABILITY through simplicity seems to be making a welcome return of late. So it's a pleasant surprise to see Audiogenic re-releasing one of The Assembly Line's classics in that very mould.

Helter Skelter requires a high degree of finger dexterity as you try to negotiate platform arrangements and squash monsters with a bouncing ball. Hit the wrong monster and it splits into two little monsters making your job harder still. A bit of brain power is also required to get past some of the trickier screens.

John Dale and Adrian Stephens actually started writing Helter Skelter in September 1988, and it was first released on the ST and Amiga in December of the same year. However, there were problems with duplication, so the product hit the shelves too late – months after the reviews, when everyone had forgotten about it.

Which is why it's back. A new PC version has been written, which runs in EGA, CGA, and Hercules, and the Amiga and ST versions have been rewritten slightly. "We've cleaned it up and added a few things," says John Dale. "The title page and high-score stuff all have new graphics. We've also fixed a few bugs. In the original game, in two player mode, if one person died in a particular place the other player would get 99 lives!"

The new versions also boast four-channel sampled music and some new sampled effects. "When we created the original game," John recalls, "I couldn't find a perfect 'boing' sound for the bouncing ball. Months after the game was released I started using some sample libraries from the States. And there it was, the perfect 'boing'. So of course when we rewrote the game, in it went."

John has also tweaked a few of a levels that were too hard. Many of those that seem impossible are actually very simple once you discover the right technique. There are loads of new monsters too, like a funky 'match-head'. They have all been designed by Herman Serrano (of **Weird Dreams** fame) – in fact, he designed so many that The Assembly Line had to lose a couple of them.

The idea for Helter Skelter came out of a group effort. John had seen **Bubble Bobble**, and that was certainly one influence. "The bouncing ball came first," he says, "and we spent ages getting that right. The monsters just sort of evolved. We originally had a little cage to drop them into or which they came from."

The Assembly Line is hoping for takers on the console front. The boys reckon it would make a wonderful GameBoy conversion, especially with a two-player link option. And who are we to disagree...

Helter Skelter has 80 levels and, fortunately, seven passwords to aid access. The last bank of 10 screens however, has to be played in two-player mode because the screen is actually split into two halves. After those 80 screens there are 28 blank screens for your own designs, which are easily entered via the built-in level designer. John designed all the original screens: "They were a sod to do, but quite rewarding."

Helter Skelter is sliding into the shops now on the Amiga, Atari ST, and PC for £19.99. So what are you waiting for?



HELTER SKELTER bounces back in its new, improved form, complete with 'cool dude' match-heads.



TIME'S RUNNING OUT – but you can get some breathing space by collecting the little clock symbol.



IF YOU MANAGE to play through all of the existing levels (some hope), there's a level designer so you can put together your own.



STELLAR DRIVING

THE LATEST piece of French fancy to come from UbiSoft is a future sport entitled Jupiter's Masterdrive. **It's set on the moons of Jupiter and sees the players tucked safely away from the action thanks to remote consoles (which control the different vehicles used to race over the varying terrains of Jupiter's satellites). Jupiter's Masterdrive will be racing onto the Amiga and Atari ST from the middle of January at £19.99. This shot is from the Atari ST version.**

SIMULMONDO COOL

IONE OF ITALY'S top software houses, Simulmondo, is set to invade Britain with the help of a magnificent seven products.

Simulmondo has had much success in Italy with six sporting simulations and a graphic adventure. And now it's hoping that British games players will find them just as appetising.

F1 Manager is a strategy-orientated simulation of the 1990 Formula One season. Featuring data from all the Grand Prix of the 1990 F1 championships, F1 Manager allows you to build a car ready to race with or against a second player through a qualifying round or 16 Grand Prix circuits. It's available soon on all three formats, at a price yet to be announced.

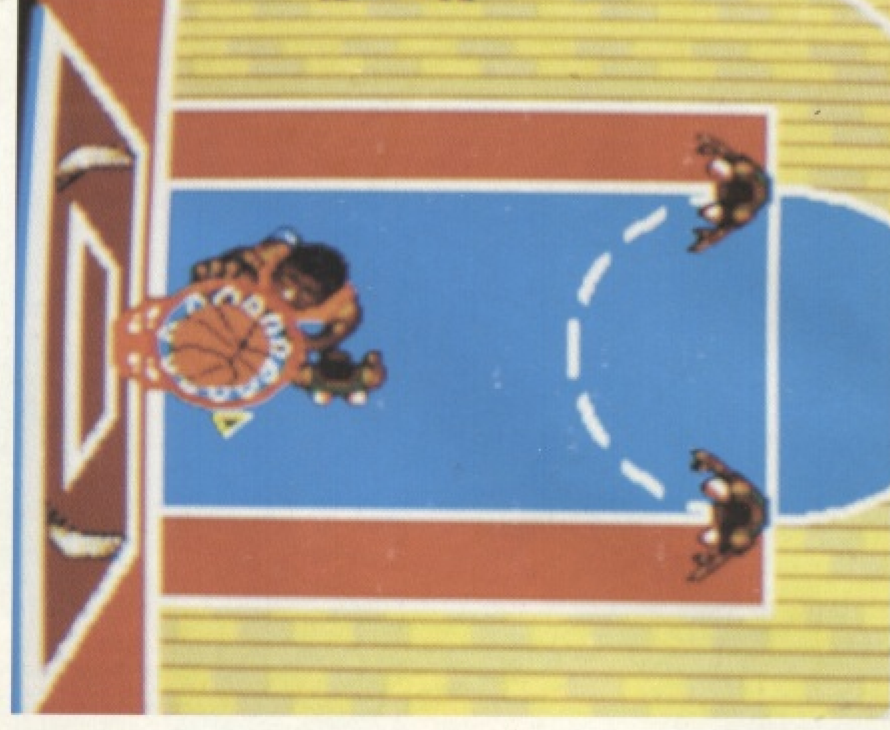
In a less 'managerial' racing vein there's **Formula 1 3D**. Not only does it boast 'live recordings of the sounds made by real F1 one-seaters' but also a 'true-to-life reproduction of Monza's Grand Prix racetrack' with a filled 3D polygon display. This one's also due about now, again at a price to be announced.

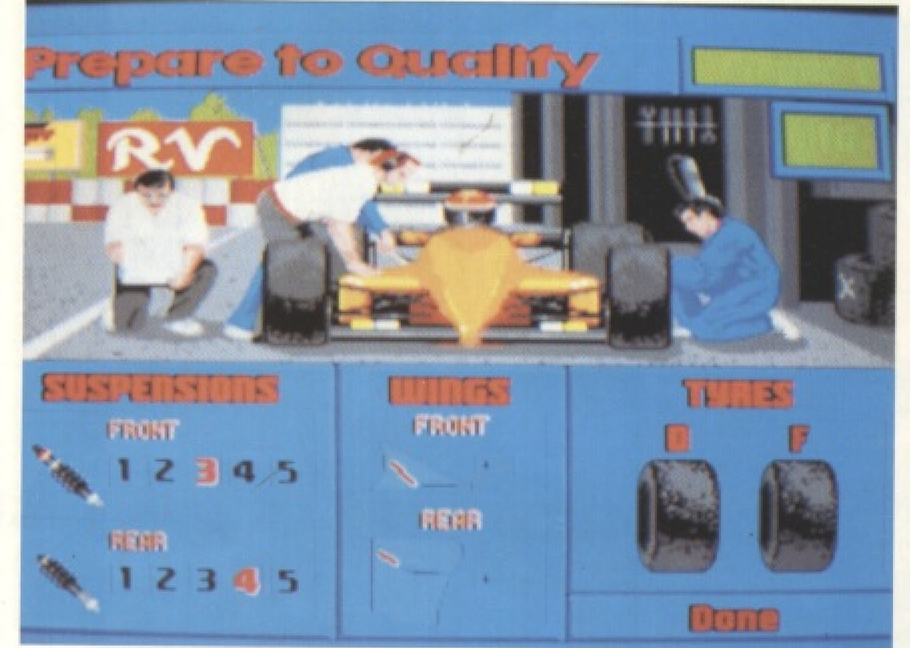
500cc Motomanager is yet another racer only this one brings all the thrills and spills of motorcycle racing to the small screen. 500cc Motomanager features 'all 16 World Championship circuits' and 'all the bikes and drivers found in the 1990 World Championships'. It should be available by the time you read this.

No prizes for guessing what the oddly titled **I Play: 3D Soccer** simulates... although it's not the first to try in 3D. That accolade must go to MicroStyle's **International Soccer Challenge**. However, I Play: 3D Soccer's three-dimensional display is full-screen. It also supports headers, overhead kicks, a simultaneous two-player option, along with the facility to move the 'camera' anywhere on the pitch. I Play: 3D Soccer looks divine, but how it plays remains to be seen. You can find out now, seeing as how it's just been released.

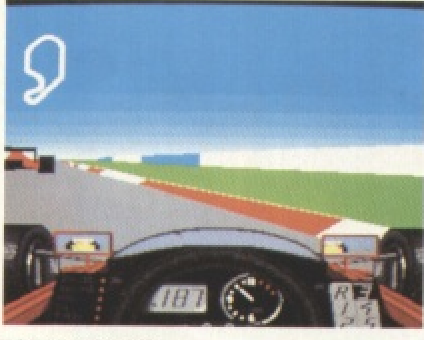
The Basket Manager provides even more three-dimensional sports thrills, this time on the basketball court. The action's five on five and viewed from above, with all the rules strictly adhered to throughout. The Basket Manager should be available now.

The most bizarre of all Simulmondo's sports simulation has to be **Big Game Fishing**. Anyone who enjoys sitting around in the rain during the early hours of the morning in the hope that they will net something wet, slimy, and wriggly will derive great joy from this one. Big Game Fishing's boat-based angling action features variable weather conditions (and emergency equipment in case the weather gets too rough), and 'lots of sought-after prey', including Black and Blue Marlin, Tuna and Swordfish. Big Game Fishing should be released on all three formats before Christmas of this year, at prices yet to be announced.


THE BASKET MANAGER



F1 MANAGER


FORMULA 1 3D



500CC MOTOMANAGER



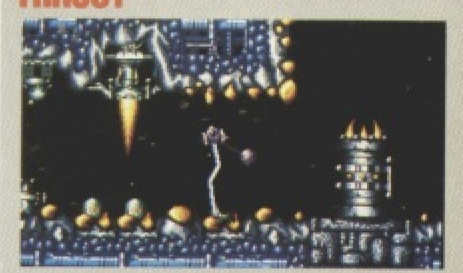
I PLAY: 3D SOCCER


BIG GAME FISHING


ITALIAN NIGHT 1999

Finally, there's Simulmondo's graphic adventure. **Italian Night 1999** is billed as 'the first simulation of a movie, thought up, written, lived, acted and set in Italy'. It's an adventure of investigation and 'simulated justice' with 'beautiful pixel ladies, superb modern weapons and cars, incredible digital indoor scenes and indescribable violence in the Milano Duomo'. Sounds like fun. Find out when it's released on all three formats early next year.

KNOCKING THE RUST OFF THRUST



UNATTRIBUTED 'tributes' of best-selling games are nothing new. However, with Zarathrusta Hewson isn't ashamed to admit that it's releasing a game inspired by Jeremy Smith's 1986 classic Thrust (which in turn was inspired by that very old coin-op Gravitar). Zarathrusta has you assisting in a major offensive against the Empire by collecting essential Klystron pods. This entails a battle against the planet's gravity and hooking up pods with your Tractor Beam. Written by Peter Verswyvelen and with graphics by Erland Robaye, Zarathrusta will be thrusting into software stores early next year.



WHAT'S TICKLING THE ONE TEAM

KATI HAMZA
9 Lives

GORDON HOUGHTON
Masterblazer
Z-Out

GARY PENN
Car-Vup
Golden Axe
Helter Skelter
Loopz
Narc
Prince Of Persia

LAURENCE SCOTFORD
Helter Skelter
Prince Of Persia
SimEarth

GARY WHITTA
9 Lives
Car-Vup
Prince Of Persia

SHELF TALKERS

ESSENTIAL software for this Christmas, as compiled by The One team.

CAR-VUP
Core Design

GOLDEN AXE
Virgin Games

HELTER SKELTER
Audiogenic

IVAN 'IRONMAN' STEWART'S SUPER OFF-ROAD RACER
Virgin Games

KICK OFF 2
Anco

PANG
Ocean

PLOTTING
Ocean

POWERMONGER
Electronic Arts

RICK DANGEROUS II
MicroStyle

SPEEDBALL II
Image Works

DEVELOPING TALENT

THE SOCIETY OF SOFTWARE AUTHORS is holding its second Developers Conference in Bournemouth on January 26th 1991. Taking part will be representatives from The One, Commodore, Virgin, Mirrorsoft, and sister publication ACE, as well as a whole host of programming talent. Further information can be obtained from Nalin Sharma on (081) 503 2521 or The Society of Software Authors, PO Box 598, Bournemouth BH6 3YB.

AUDIOGENIC IN EXILE

AUDIOGENIC has just announced that it has acquired the publishing rights to the 16-bit conversions of Exile **(which was to be released on the Activision label before the company 'wound down' its UK operations). If you missed the News in Issue 24, Exile is an involved arcade adventure with a difference from Jeremy** 'Thrust' **Smith and Peter** 'Starship Command' **Irving. In fact, so deep is Exile that apparently it takes even its authors seven hours to complete it! Amiga and Atari ST versions are due to appear at the of January 1991, at prices yet to be announced.**

SCAVENGER AXED

WITH CULT classics **Nebulus** and **Eliminator** under his belt, John Phillips' recent project for Hewson, namely **Scavenger**, has had to be cancelled. Scavenger had originally been designed as a time travel game, but developed more into a three-dimensional version of **Ghouls 'n' Ghosts**. The program used a sophisticated shadowing effect, but Hewson ultimately decided that it was not possible to produce a game using this method that would justify a full price tag. John is currently concentrating on "conversions", but may consider using the method again in a future project.



PHILLIPS: Putting Scavenger behind him and moving on to bigger and better things...

BEASTLIER

FANS OF Psygnosis' two Shadow Of The Beasts **will be pleased to know that Reflections, the team behind them, is currently hard at work on** Shadow Of The Beast 3. **There are no firm details available as yet, but SOTB3 should be completed in time for the CES show next year.**

JUST THE CRICKET!

ANYONE WAITING for Cinemaware to release a TV Sports: Cricket **or DSI to produce a** 4D Sports Cricket **is out of luck.**

However, there *is* good news for anyone interested in a simulation of this great English tradition. One home computer cricket is out and about even as we speak, with another to follow next year.

Audiogenic is in fact working on a new Graham Gooch product entitled **Graham Gooch's World Class Cricket**. It's along the same lines as the previous 8-bit incarnation but with very much enhanced graphics, and one feature added to take advantage of 16-bit – all players have shadows, which shorten and lengthen as the sun moves.

More immediate though, is D&H Games' **Cricket Captain**, now available for the Amiga and Atari ST, priced at £24.99 apiece. For further details, write to D&H Games, 114 Clifton Road, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5AN.

WHEEL, WHEEL, WHEEL

DUE TO APPEAR from Ocean in the later half of 1991 is Wild Wheels, **"a car game with a huge difference". Just how huge this difference is remains to be seen, as Ocean would not divulge any further information. More news when we have it.**

REPLAY IT AGAIN SAM

MICRODEAL is understandably quite chuffed to see that its new Replay 8 **sound sampler for the Atari ST is heavily featured in a new video from top dance group** King Bee. **Microdeal's Amiga sampler** AMAS **has already received similar treatment from Paula Abdul. If you want to get in on the act, Replay 8 can be had for £79.95. Further details are available from John Symes on (0726) 68020.**



STILL RUNNIN'

BACK IN 1988 US Gold revealed that it was to release **OutRun Europa** – basically a new, tweaked incarnation of Sega's classic arcade racer **OutRun**. For one reason or another it never actually appeared. But it will now, two years since it was originally announced. Probe's still putting it together, and we should see something in the first quarter of 1991. Incidentally, Probe is also working on the Amiga and Atari ST conversions of Sega's rip-roaring racer **Super Monaco Grand Prix**, for completion early next year and also for US Gold. Whether Probe will also be handling the conversions of Sega's visually stunning 3D shoot 'em up **G-Loc** for US Gold remains to be seen.



DIG THE LAST BREED

OCEAN'S THIRD and final incarnation of Clive Barker's Nightbreed **is, at last, in the final stages of production and should be completed in time for release early next year. In case you'd forgotten, this one is more of a Role Playing affair than its predecessors (see Reviews in Issue 25), and is being put together by Imagitec.**

IT'S FINAL!

US GOLD'S CONVERSIONS of CapCom's cracking beat 'em up **Final Fight** to the ST and Amiga are being produced by Creative Materials, the team behind **ROTOX**, **Operation Harrier** and the imminent conversions of Sega's **Line Of Fire**, all for US Gold. You can expect to see how it's shaping up early next year within these very pages.

FAIR FOR ALL

THE NEXT All Formats Computer Fair is to take place at the New Horticultural Hall, Westminster, London on the 15th of December. The fair attracts many exhibitors from bargain software sellers to booksellers and computer clubs. Amiga, Atari ST and PC software and hardware will be very much in evidence, often at greatly reduced prices. The first fair in the New Year will also take place at the New Horticultural Hall, but on the 2nd of February 1991. Further details can be obtained from John Riding on (0225) 447453.

BAD NEWS FROM EA

WELL, IT IS for Atari ST owners. We thought we ought to mention that Electronic Arts is not currently planning to convert to the ST the rather splendid racing simulation **Indianapolis 500** (see Review in Issue 16) or the super submarine simulation **688 Attack Sub**. A conversion of Indy isn't ruled out, but don't hold your breath. Anyone desperate to play either simulation should buy either an Amiga or PC...

PLANES AND TRAINS

MICROPROSE'S Amiga and Atari ST conversions of its flight 'n' fight simulator F-15 II **will appear in May 1991. Neither version should differ greatly from the PC original (for further details see Review in Issue 13). Less violent and less imminent are the conversions of** Railroad Tycoon **(see Review in Issue 21). This unusual but by no means dull strategy event can be experienced by Amiga and Atari ST owners in August 1991.**

WRATH OF THE DEMON™

You are on a quest to rid the kingdom of an evil Demon and his minions, rescue the princess and restore honour to your king. Your quest will lead you through caves, swamps, temples and castles before reaching your ultimate challenge ... the Demon himself.

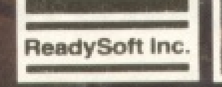
Wrath of the Demon combines spectacular graphics, animation, sound and playability, featuring:

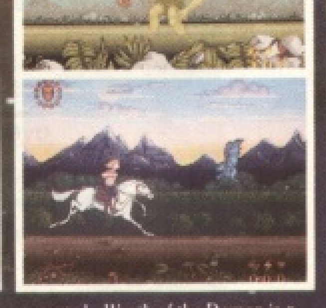
* Over 600 Screens of Action
* Over 1400 Frames of Animation
* 15 Level Parallax Scrolling for Realistic 3D Effect
* Bi-directional Smooth Scrolling
* State of the Art Animation
* Breath taking Backgrounds
* Over 100 Colours on Screen
* 60 Frames/sec
* Over 3 Megabytes of Graphics
* Large Well-defined Characters
* More than 100 Different Monsters
* 20 Different Movements
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* Large on-screen Maps
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* Arcade Game Quality

Superb gameplay and control of characters makes this a stunning graphic adventure in every sense.

Available for Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC and C64.







SCREENSHOTS SHOWN ARE FROM AMIGA VERSION

EMPIRE

SEBERN

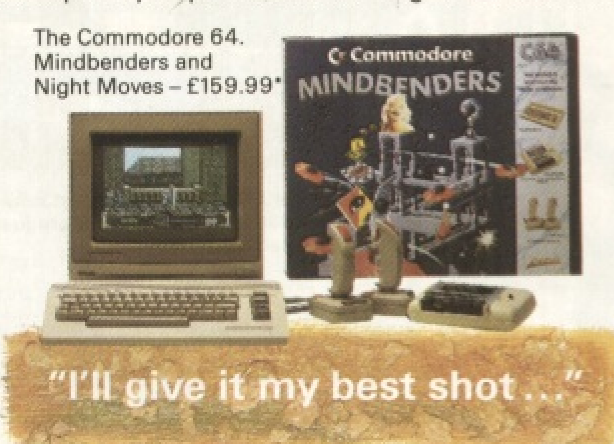
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the 90's' includes 10 free diskettes, mouse mat and introductory video. At just £599.99 it's a small price to help any child throughout their academic life.

And when class is over, there's our new Amiga 500 'Screen Gems' pack which includes Deluxe Paint II and four new challenges, each based on a blockbuster movie; Back to the Future II, Nightbreed, Shadow of the Beast II and the devastating Days of Thunder for only £399.99.

On the subject of fun and games, we present a totally new double pack for the C64, undoubtedly the world's favourite games computer. If brain-stretching tasks are your forte, choose 'Mindbenders' with Confuzion, Split Personalities and Trivial Pursuits. Or if it's pure escapism you prefer, there's 'Night Moves' with

The Commodore 64. Mindbenders and Night Moves – £159.99*



"I'll give it my best shot..."

the compelling Midnight Resistance, Nightbreed, Secret Agency Sly Spy and Shadow Warriors. The C64 computer comes with data cassette and two joysticks and is outstanding value at £159.99.

This Christmas, we are also proud to unveil the C64 Games System, a system built for one single purpose – having fun.

The C64 Games System is instant enjoyment for all the family and comes complete with annihilator joystick and four fun-filled games. When you've mastered Klax, International Soccer, Flimbo's Quest and Fiendish Freddy's Big Top, you can choose from another hundred. All this for under £100.

Every games cartridge for the C64 Games System is compatible with the C64 computer. And all Commodore machines, together with a complete range of peripherals, are available from any major high street store.

So whichever one of our computers you do choose, it's sure to bring out the best in your family. After all, there's a little bit of Commodore in all of us.

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TWO GOOD TO MISS

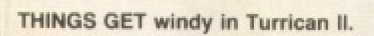
THE SEQUEL to one of 1990's best blasters is set to appear early next year.

Turrican II: The Final Fight **continues the story from where Rainbow Arts' original left off. Having been defeated many years before, the evil Machine is back to lay claim to the freedom-loving planet of Landorin. Now once again it's up to Turrican to clean up the mess and save the people of Landorin from the Machine's clutches.**

Turrican's **creator, Manfred Trenz, is the man behind the sequel. He's promising some sexy improvements over his original, which raked in a very respectable 90 per cent in our August issue.**

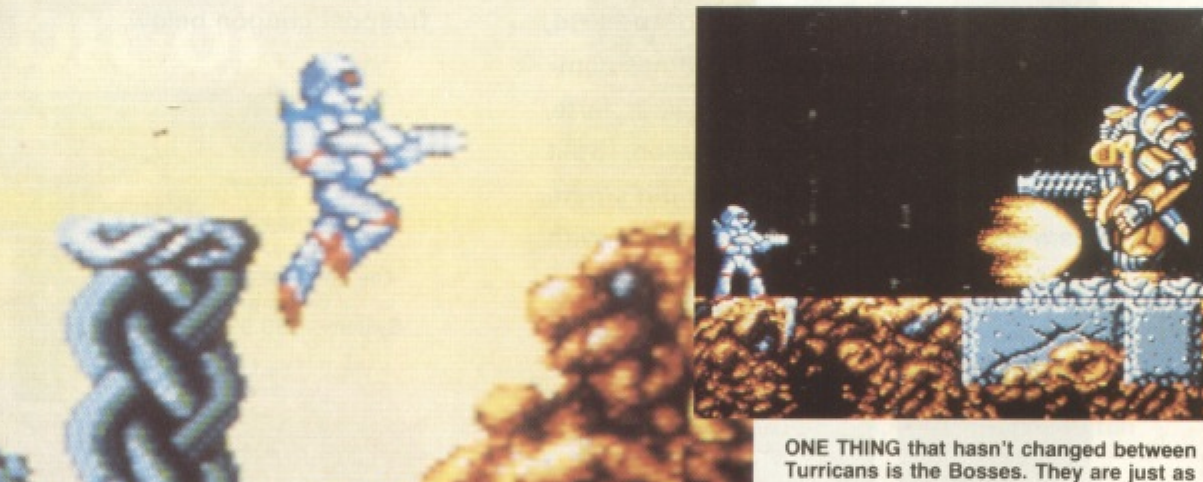
For the technicians among you, there are 2Mb of graphics, 1,500 screens, 400K of sound, 20 tunes, 50 sound effects, and 50 frames per second smooth parallax scrolling. In layman's terms this means super-fast arcade-quality multi-way blasting just like the sort found in the original – only better.

Turrican II is scheduled to arrive on ST and Amiga next February at a price that's still to be decided. If more information is what you crave, there's a full Work In Progress in the next issue.


THINGS GET windy in Turrican II.



THERE'S MORE to Turrican II than what's on the surface. Now you can voyage to the bottom of the sea too.


ONE THING that hasn't changed between Turricans is the Bosses. They are just as big and bad as ever.

LONDON ON DISK!

TIME OUT PUBLICATIONS and Triangle Interactive Publications have announced the release of the Time Out London Guide 1991 **on disk for the IBM PC and compatibles. For just £19.95, information on every aspect of life in the capital from accommodation to night-life can be at your fingertips. This is the first in a series of disk-based guides which are to cover Amsterdam, Frankfurt, New York, Paris, and eating and drinking in London.**

DAMOCLES DUO



GREAT NEWS for Damocles **fans – Novagen is releasing a pair of mission disks. The disks contain 'saves' for loading into the original program, and text displays providing mission briefings and solutions. Novagen promises that playing the new missions will lead the player to discover many things about Paul Woake's creation that they may have previously missed. The first mission disk is out now, with a second to follow at the beginning of January. Both are available on the Amiga and Atari ST for £9.99.**

NOT BAD!

THOSE BODACIOUS dudes Bill and Ted are back! It's been confirmed that the sequel to **Bill And Ted's Excellent Adventure** is going into production. Called **Bill And Ted Go To Hell**, it re-unites Keanu Reeves and Alex Winter as the two time-travelling dudes from San Dimas, along with George Carlin as their mentor Rufus. The writers of the original – Chris Matheson and Ed Solomon – have scripted the sequel, but details are fuzzy as to the storyline. The title suggests that there will probably be more than a few laughs 'down under'. But don't hold your breath – nothing's expected until at least very late next year.

Also, there are whispers of a 16-bit Bill and Ted adventure (it's already up and running on Nintendo console). More news when we have it...

NINJA WITHOUT A HALF-SHELL

THE HARDENED HERO of System 3's Last Ninja **action adventures is back.**

Ninja Remix is set on the beautiful island of Lin Fen, Ninja's latest adventure has him tackling his brother's treacherous assassins who have taken control of the sacred Ninja shrine.

There are six regions to explore: The Wastelands, The Wilderness, The Palace Gardens, The Dungeons, The Palace, and The Inner Sanctum. Each region features distinctive visuals, and all the animation and atmosphere that have characterised the Ninja adventures to date.

Priced at £24.99 on Atari ST and Amiga, Ninja Remix will be available from early December.



CAUSE a ninja-ry or two in System 3's Ninja Remix.

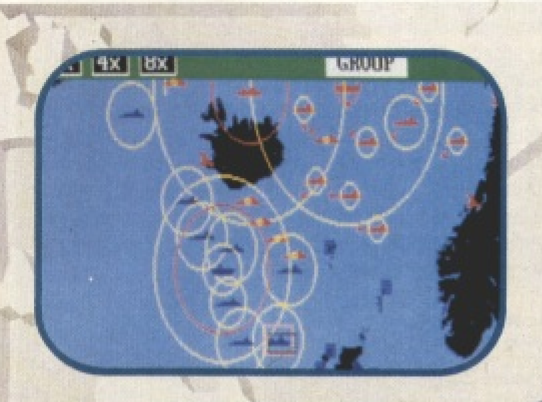
HARPOON





Somewhere in the desolate and freezing wastes of the North Atlantic, between Iceland and the Kola Peninsula, a Soviet battle fleet is lurking, ready to pounce on its prey.

As NATO Task Force Commander you must deploy your fleet of submarines, ships and aircraft to locate, engage and defeat the Kremlin's finest.



Produced by LARRY BOND the Naval Analyst, HARPOON portrays the superpower's final confrontation. Now it's up to you.

With graphics that make everything else look like finger painting and an arsenal of weaponry that comes up to your armpits. HARPOON'S non-stop action, relentless intensity and chilling responsibility will leave you gasping.

It's more than a mere game – it's a current event!!

Available now on PC.















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AUDIOGENIC GOES LOOPY!

HAVING DRIVEN us all to distraction with Helter Skelter **(see page 20), Audiogenic is set to do the same with another form of infuriatingly addictive 'puzzler'.**

This one's called Loopz, and it's a delightfully simple concept vaguely reminiscent of a blend of **Tetris** and **PipeMania**. All you have to do is make loops (hence the title) from the different shapes the computer provides. As soon as a shape appears, a timer ticks down. The shape must be placed before the time runs out, otherwise a 'life' is lost.

And so it goes on, until all 'lives' are lost. The loops can be any size or shape (the bigger the better for bonus points), but the pieces can't cross or be placed on top of each other. It's surprisingly compelling and rather relaxing too.

There are three slight variations on the basic theme, and three different David Whittaker compositions to accompany the 'looping' (although it must be said that two of the tunes are little too 'racy' to suit the pace). If you feel the need to provide your own aural support, you can always resort to the simplistic sound effects – or even have no noise at all.

Despite escaping our review net, Loopz comes highly recommended. It's available now on Amiga and Atari ST for £19.99, along with the PC version at £24.99.

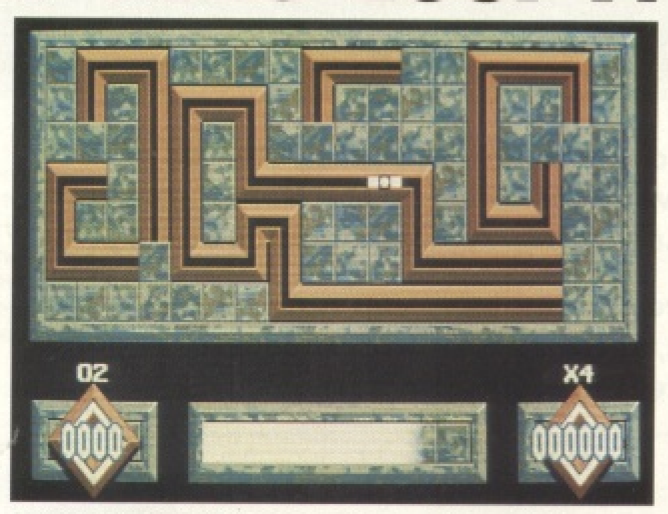
Loopz started life in February 1989. It was developed by Ian Upton who, until recently, was working for Audiogenic as a full-time designer (just for the record, Ian was responsible for **SuperLeague Manager** and **Emlyn Hughes' Arcade Quiz**). He's now pursuing a freelance design career.

Loopz represents Ian's first completely original design (the aforementioned pair were 'worked out' from existing concepts). He put together a working 'rough' using Mandarin's **STOS**, before Nik '**3D Pool**' Pelling 'converted' it to the Amiga and Atari ST. The PC incarnations came courtesy of Brian Cotton (who, in his time, has converted **Impact** and **Helter Skelter** to the PC).

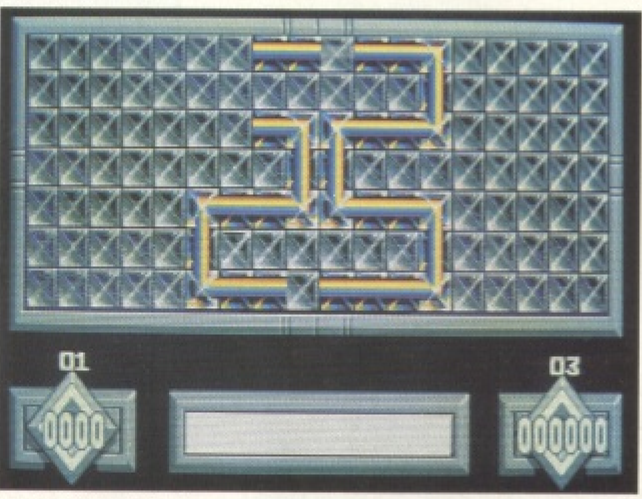
But the Loopz story doesn't end there. Anyone who frequents a public house or arcade from this month could find a coin-operated Loopz lurking within. Barcrest's Skill With Prizes* version of Loopz has you playing to win cash. It was converted by Graham Blighe (he wrote umpteen versions of **Emlyn Hughes Soccer** for Audiogenic), with music once again provided by David Whittaker (apparently the conversion didn't present too much of a problem as the sound chip inside the machine is pretty much the same as an ST's).

Loopz has also been converted to more traditional coin-operated form, courtesy of CapCom. It's basically the same as the home computer versions but with beefed up graphics and sound. Arcade Loopz is released in Japan in December. It should reach these shores early next year.

*** A Skill With Prizes coin-operated machine falls neatly between the gap in the floorboards of the law regarding gambling. You see, fruit machines involve gambling to win money, which means a licence is required to run one on the premises. SWP machines on the other hand are skill-orientated and so a licence is not required, thus increasing their popularity among public houses. Most SWP machines come in the form of trivia quiz games, although more recently there has been a trend to produce more arcade-orientated machines, such as** Tetris Payout.



AS YOU CAN SEE, the loops are forming thick and fast. Fortunately, a small shape has been given (it's the one highlighted in the centre) – anything more cumbersome could not have been placed. Another variation on this theme has you making loops through a series of 'levels' complete with passwords and bonus stages (the third variation on the theme).



AND THIS IS THE bonus stage, which is also a playable game in its own right. A loop is displayed for a second before the computer removes a few pieces. All you have to do is remember which piece went where and put them all back when the computer 'returns' them one by one. It looks far easier than it really is. Just wait till you see some of the more complex shapes with dozens of pieces removed!

RAM, BAM, THANK YOU MA'AM!



PSYGNOSIS' contribution to the ever-expanding race 'n' ram genre is Nitro. **Set in the near future, it's a top-down multi-way scrolling affair in the** Super Cars **and** Hot Rod **vein. Between one and three players screech around 32 tracks with city, forest, desert and wasteland settings. There are plenty of power-ups to impress too, although the lack of any weaponry to bump the other players off with seems an odd omission. Still, it's all a bit of a laugh. You can buy it now on Amiga or Atari ST for the sum of £24.99.**

THE GOAL-DEN SHOT!

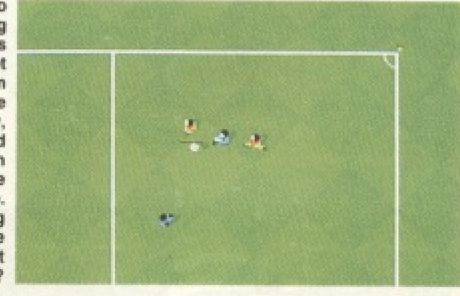
The Kick Off 2 Golden Goal Of The Month
PRESENTED BY THE ONE AND ANCO
December

IT'S AMAZING what some people will do for money. There are bank robbers, drug dealers, kidnappers, loan sharks, corrupt sportsmen and politicians... And what does it all come down to, eh? Green, that's what. Dosh, sponds, dosh, folding stuff. But whatever you call it, money is the same the world over, and it never fails to get people's pulses racing. Which might just explain why, since last month's phenomenal prize increase to a fantastic £200 in cash for the Goal Of The Month, the number of entries has increased five-fold. But you know, money shouldn't really be the incentive here. Of course it's all very well to have notes falling out of your overstuffed wallet, and not being bothered to bend over and pick them up 'cos you are so rich. But what the Golden Goals competition is all about is skill, hope, dedication, effort and glory. That's what the game that made this country great is built on, and that's the tradition we hope to continue here. And doing an admirable job of keeping the Kick Off flag flying high is this month's winner Steven Howard of Lowestoft in Suffolk. His brilliant lead-up and goal-making play prove that a goal isn't just about the kick that puts the ball in the net. The play that leads up to it is just as important, if not more so. Steve's sterling effort earns the boy £200 in used, non-sequentially numbered notes. With goals of this quality starting to emerge, the competition is going to be very close in the coming months.

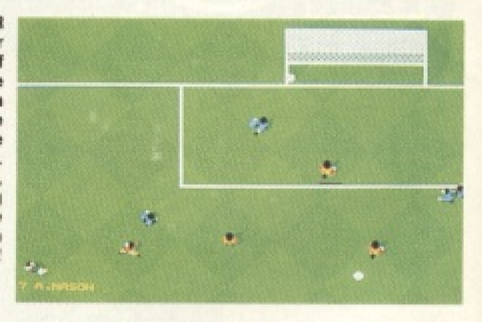
STEVE'S INITIAL RUN is fairly mundane. It begins in the centre of the pitch, from where he takes the ball, unchallenged, up the pitch towards the top-right corner to prepare for a cross. But one blue defender isn't going to give up easily.



STEVE MAKES IT into a perfect crossing position, and he's determined not to let that defender give him any bother. He dummies one way, then the other, and then turns back on himself, leaving the defender in a daze. Steve smacks a telling cross to the other side of the goal... But is it too powerful?



NOT ON YOUR NELLY! The 'keeper rushes out but as if from nowhere, Steve appears and slams a thunderbolt past the 'keeper and into the corner of the net. Inch-perfect precision, split-second timing and incredible force combine to produce a truly awesome goal!



UNLESS, OF COURSE, you know different, Esther. If you think you can do better, show us! Come on, you could win some loot! Send your efforts (which must comply with the rules stipulated below) to GOLDEN GOALS, The One, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

THE NOT-TO-BE-IGNORED RULES

FAILURE TO COMPLY with any of these regulations merits instant disqualification.

1) No more than THREE (3) goals per disk, and no more than one disk per entrant.

2) All goals MUST be score by the entrant and NOT by the computer player (it's easy enough to tell, so don't waste our time).

3) The disk label MUST contain the following information: the entry's format (Amiga or Atari ST), the entrant's name, address and (if applicable) telephone number.

THE POWER TO CHANGE AMERICAN HISTORY

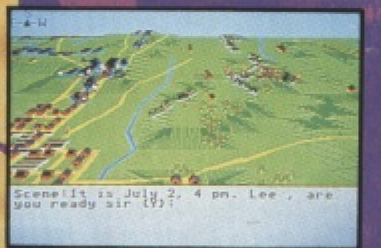
CAN YOU LEAD THE OUT-NUMBERED REBELS TO VICTORY AND WIN THE GREATEST BATTLE IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR?





The third title in ARC's acclaimed BattleScapes series, Gettysburg is a war game simulation from the American Civil War. The battle featured was a massive confrontation between 70,000 troops under the charismatic General Lee and 90,000 Union soldiers under the dry and calculating General Meade. It was the pivoted battle of the American Civil War.

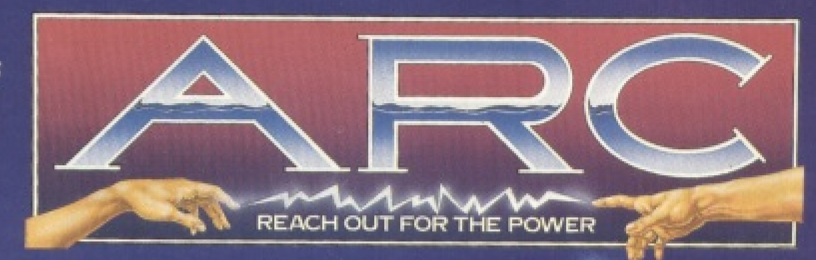
Screen shots from Atari ST format.



History tells us that Lee lost the battle, but with Gettysburg you can re-write history. Can you guide the rebels to victory and change the course of American history? Would you be able to defeat Lee and ensure a Union victory? The choice and the challenge are yours.

Features:

- ***Stunning BattleScapes graphics.***
- ***Original Soundtrack.***



- ***Eighty page playguide.***
- ***Laminated Map.***
- ***Free write on, rub off BattleScapes pen.***

Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.



REACH OUT FOR THE POWER OF ARC
ATARI ST · CBM AMIGA £29.99
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EXTERMINATE!

Laurence Scotford discovers a handy way of dealing with insect infestation in The Assembly Line's coin-op conversion for Audiogenic.

GOTTLIEB'S arcade machine, **Exterminator**, has to be one of the more unusual to emerge recently. The player controls a huge hand with which all manner of creepy-crawlies must be eliminated, either by firing at them with a 'laser-finger' or crushing them through squeezing or a quick thump against the floor. Eliminate all the pests in one room and your fingers do the walking to another, similarly infested area of the stricken house. There is one way to make progress quickly: in the kitchen, wait for the fridge door to open and then shoot into it to get instantly transported to the next house.

This is actually the first arcade translation that The Assembly Line has done as a team, although Adrian Stephens did conversions of **Ping Pong** and **Donkey Kong** on the Amstrad CPC range some time ago. "We took Exterminator," says John Dale, "because it was so different."

So how did the team find its first piece of arcade machine conversion work? "We had access to virtually everything," explains John. "That is, graphics and sound files, and the game's algorithms. We didn't have the source code, that was written for the machine's weird graphics processor."

The graphics processor in question is a Texas Instruments' chip that manages to generate up to 32,000 colours. That's quite a problem when you are trying to convert to a machine with only 16 colours available! The hands on the original machine were digitised, as were some of the more common creatures as well. The unusual creatures are like digitised cartoons.

"The attract sequence, which shows a van pulling up outside a house and then the hand crawling into it, seems to have been created using digitised model animation," John tells us. "We are hoping to be able to keep it all in."

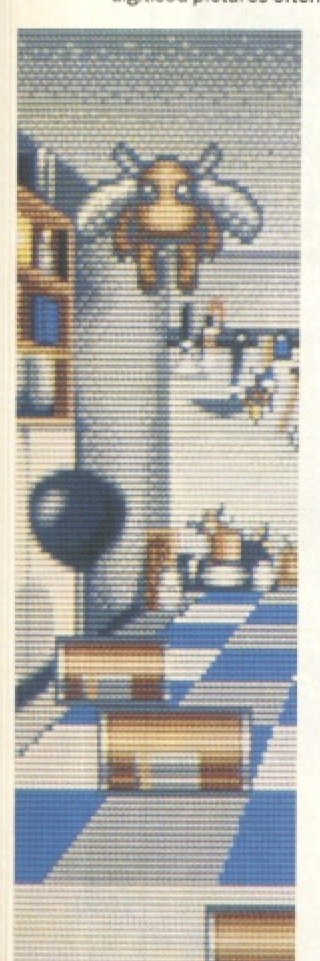
The graphics on the conversions actually possess a clarity not seen on Gottlieb's machine. "My theory," explains John,"is that digitised pictures often look slightly muddy. We had a 11little bit of scope to crisp things up.

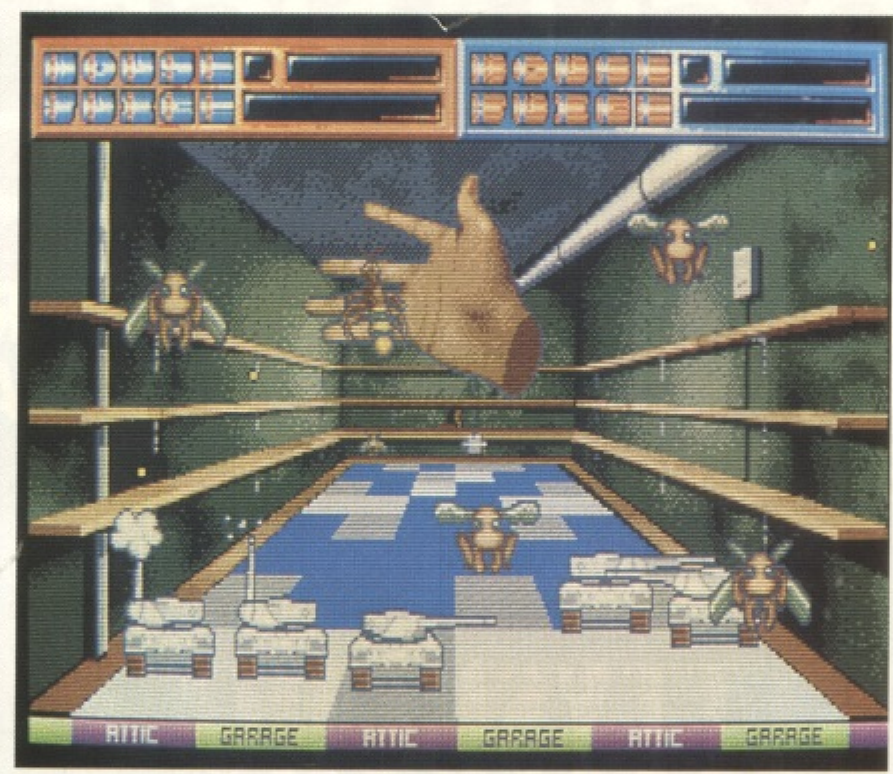
"Originally Audiogenic was going to do the graphics but was pushed for time. We got in some guys called Blue Turtle and they set to work colouring everything using the 16-bit palettes. I was amazed to see how some of the backgrounds turned out.

"There are also a few additions we've made to the original graphics, like a bottle of bleach, a clock, and some posters with arcade characters."

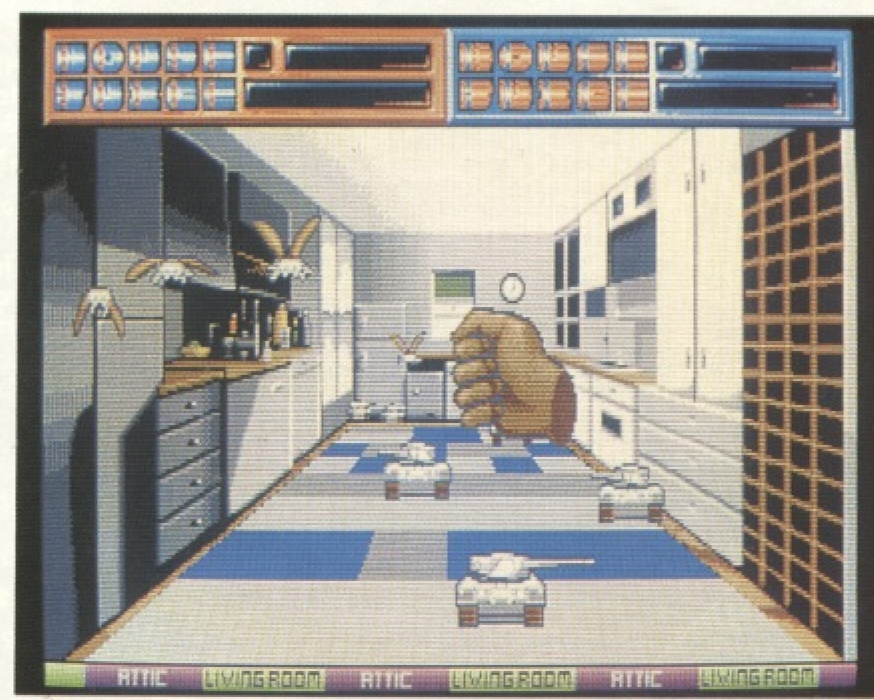
All of the original graphics have been retained. The only difference is in the implementation of the hand. For some actions there are 40 or 50 frames of animation, so a few of these had to be omitted, but this doesn't really notice.

The original sprite data filled 24 Degas

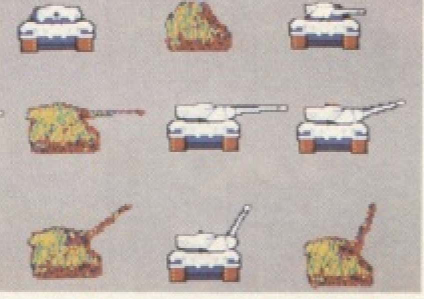




AS YOU CAN SEE from this shot of theAtari ST version, Blue Turtle has done atremendous job with the graphics, andthanks to The Assembly Line'sprogramming skills it plays well too.



A CRUSHING blow is dealt to one of the nasty creepy-crawlies attacking your hand. Time things badly however, and your career will come to a stinging end.



HERE THE tank sprites demonstrate how the 16-colour ST takes to 32,000-colour sprites, and how they look when Blue Turtle has finished with them.

Elite screens and there are 12 backgrounds. There are about 170K of sprites in the final product. In the original there was no need to compress anything — memory is, within reason, no object with arcade machines. The Assembly Line has had to compress everything to the max. To speed things up, the only sprites that are decompressed during play are those that are actually needed for a particular level. All that's stored on the disk is the largest size of each sprite. The scaling program generates the eight other sizes as needed.

Another aspect of Exterminator that the team found it could improve on was the collision detection. Each frame for each sprite has a rectangular collision zone. A fly, for example, goes through eight frames of animation, but the collision rectangle changes size drastically for each frame, and there doesn't appear to be any reason for this. It does mean that collision detection is idiosyncratic on the coin-op. Also, some of the things in the distance are almost impossible to hit. The Assembly Line has smoothed out the whole collision process. It has also written a new proximity detection routine for the laser shots.

Much attention has been lavished on the sound too. The team has a great sampled sound routine which has been used for everything. There is no chip-generated sound, even on the ST. Even so, there is no appreciable decrease in the speed of play.

To date the Assembly Line has put around a month's work into the coding, with about a month's preparation before that. The ST and Amiga versions are very nearly ready. There is just a front-end and a few details to add. The PC version may be ready a month or so afterwards. "We are reasonably confident that this is going to be a good one," enthuses John.

So, will The Assembly Line be taking on more coin-op conversions? "There's a massive gap between a lot of arcade machines and the ST," states John. "We wouldn't have taken on this conversion if we didn't think we could come close to the original machine. We would consider doing more conversions providing we could do justice to the original game."

Apart from **Cybercon III** (the subject of a Work In Progress and featured on this month's cover disk), which will be finished after Christmas, The Assembly Line will be working on another secret project for Audiogenic, which it reckons will be huge.

Beyond that the team's keen to get involved with GameBoy or console work. "Lucasfilm took care of all the **PipeMania** conversions for us, so there was nothing to do on that one," says John. "We think the Gameboy is a fabulous thing and we'd like to do something for it, **Helter Skelter** perhaps . . ." ●

FINALE



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BAT TO THE FUTURE



ENTERING the spaceport bar you have your first encounter with a native – a rough-looking skunk. How do you deal with this stinker?



IN THE SPACEPORT. This location shows just how much attention has been paid to the visual side of BAT.

"HELLO AGENT KALHEAN, I hope you enjoyed your trip..." This is not the sort of thing you expect a strange man to say to you in a public lavatory. But that's exactly how your adventure begins in UbiSoft's new Bureau of Astral Troubleshooters.

BAT is a cosmetically impressive icon-driven adventure with future combat cum flight simulation elements. You play an intergalactic special agent who has been assigned to track down a missing scientist in possession of dangerous secrets. This mission involves exploring of many exotic locations as you find and question strange characters.

From time to time your flying and combat skills are put to the test. Mastery of these talents is essential if you are to succeed in rescuing the scientist and his secrets.

BAT on the Atari ST comes complete with a 'dongle' that plugs into the cartridge port. As well as functioning as a useful anti-piracy device it also connects up to headphones or a hi-fi, giving ST owners top quality stereo sound. The device is also to be supported by future UbiSoft products.

BAT is available now on the Amiga and PC for £29.99, and Atari ST for £34.99 (with dongle).



TERRAPOLIS is an exotic city swarming with equally exotic races. What a shame you have no time to stop and admire all the sights.

FOUR FROM OCEAN

ALSO WARMING up in the Ocean stable are DID's space extravaganza Epic **(which is at last scheduled for release in the first quarter of '91) and the adaptations of Sam Raimi's movie** Darkman. **There's less information available on the company's latest acquisition,** RoboCop 3, **and an odd little number called** Demonsgate, **which insiders are promising to be "the ultimate role-playing game."**

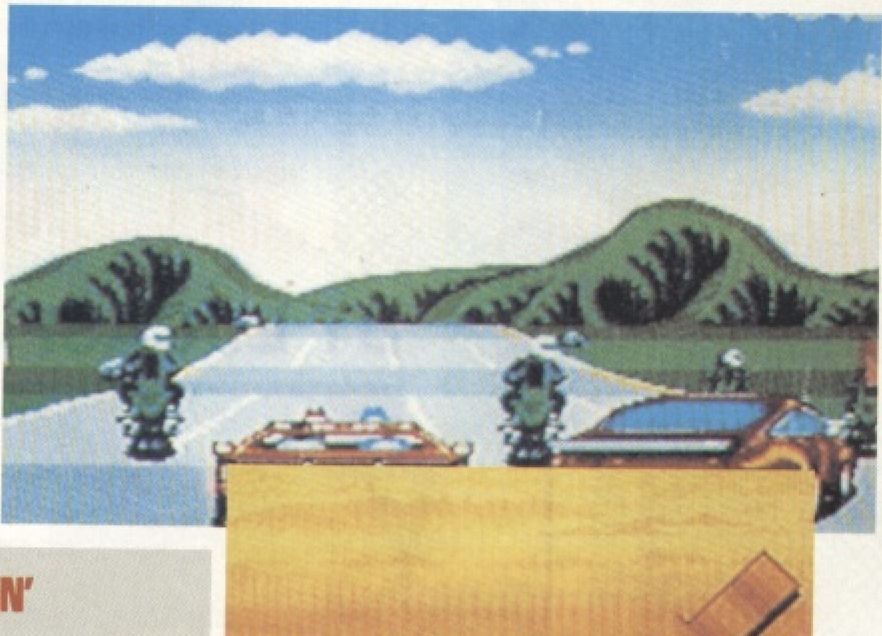


CYBER ASSAULT

NO, NOT the one proposed by Bullfrog in our April Fool earlier this year. This Cyber Assault **is from Arc and is billed as "the first accurate simulation of a humanoid figure travelling in an unrestricted 3D world". Cyber Assault stars Trax, an exo-skeletal humanoid built from 3D polygons. Competing against the clock, Trax faces some of the toughest obstacles ever created. Cyber Assault also features remote camera views so that you can see the action from any angle. Amiga and Atari ST owners can take part in this event early next year, at a price of £24.99.**

CHASE HQ II

OCEAN'S CREDIBLE conversion of Taito's Chase HQ **was one of the major players in last year's Christmas chart. Pretty soon we will find out if the sequel will do the same in 1990's festive hit parade.** Special Criminal Investigation: Chase HQ II **(or SCI for short) comprises the same old 'chase and bump the villains' action, but with an armoury of collectible weapons, changeable weather conditions and even nastier criminals. Currently having the finishing touches put to it by developer ICE (who did** Turbo OutRun **for US Gold), SCI should be on a local software shelf near you round about now. The price: £24.99 on Amiga or Atari ST.**



OCEAN GETS TERMINATOR II

OCEAN HAS snapped up the licence to what promises to be one of 1991's biggest cinematic hits – Terminator II: Judgment Day. **Mr Schwarzenegger returns as the less-than-sociable cyborg, and original writer-director James Cameron is back at the helm. When the film will appear is anyone's guess but next Summer is likely. No doubt Ocean will be counting on it as one of its big cards for next Christmas. Incidentally, you may be interested to know that while the original** The Terminator **cost six million dollars to make, the sequel is rumoured to be costing 60 million plus!**



HARDER DRIVIN'

HERE'S A FIRST SHOT of Domark's forthcoming Hard Drivin' II, **currently being written by Juergen Friedrich. As we revealed a couple of issues back, this one's not converted from an Atari coin-op, instead it's an attempt to add extra elements to the original. There are four tracks to race, along with a track editor facility which allows you to design your own courses. You can even link up machines for two-player fun! Hard Drivin' II's looking a bit nippy – much faster than the original in fact. Tune in next month for full details...**

CUTTING CONVERSIONS

DEVELOPER PROBE sure is a bit busy at the moment. Apart from all the aforementioned conversions in progress, the team's also converting yet another coin-op for US Gold – namely CapCom's Magic Sword. **It's described as "a bit like** Gauntlet **meets** Golden Axe**", and promises to be every bit as entertaining as both those classics. Further details, including the release date, have yet to be confirmed.**

SMASHING!

PROBE ALSO recently began work on the Amiga and Atari ST conversions of Williams' current arcade sensation Smash TV. **Ocean intends to release them in the second quarter of next year.**

SHADOW DANCING

WITH A PAIR of corking conversions of Chip's Challenge **under its belt (see Review on page 120), development team Images has moved on to convert Sega's beat 'em up** Shadow Dancer **for US Gold. A release date has yet to be set, but we should be able to show you something towards the end of the first quarter of next year.**

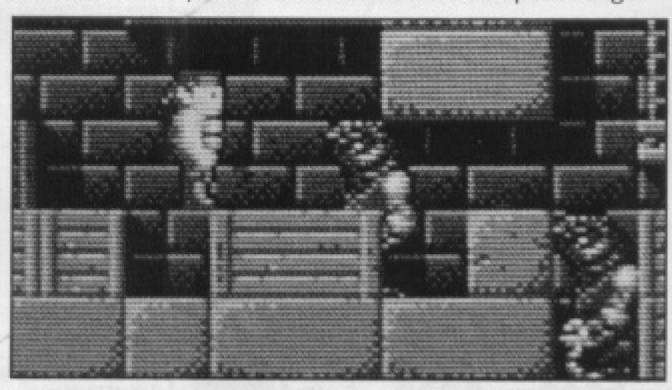
Incidentally, US Gold is remaining tight-lipped as to whether it has acquired the rights to convert any further Lynx titles to the 16-bit machines.

'GENIC GEN

THE NORMALLY QUIET Audiogenic stable has no less than 18 projects in development for the new year.

First up is SuperLeague Manager, **another addition to the overflowing soccer management genre. This will be closely followed by Wreckers**, an isometric 3D arcade-adventure set on a space station. Wreckers is the first of a new batch of projects to come from prolific developer Denton Designs. There are at least three others in the pipeline for 1991.

More prominently though, is the Summer debut of Audiogenic's **Sports Action** range. The company's promising a release based on every major sport – and the first release is NOT going to be a soccer simulation. Apparently the intention is to be the UK equivalent of Cinemaware's TV Sports range.



SWITCHBLADE TWO

WE ALL RAVED about Simon Rick Dangerous **Phipps' excellent arcade adventure** Switchblade **back in December 1989, when it collected 88 per cent. Now Sheffield-based publisher Gremlin is planning to release a sequel, entitled** Switchblade II. **Details are scarce at present, though it's expected that the original's style will be retained. Core Design's Simon Phipps isn't producing the sequel – Gremlin's handling this one itself. Expect to see something towards the middle of 1991.**

KILLER COMPILATIONS

A QUALITY compilation exclusive to PC owners is a rare but beautiful thing. And it just so happens that US Gold is releasing one.

The **Power Crash** collection features some of US Gold's finest PC arcade conversions to date. Heading the line-up is that classic racer **Outrun**, which puts you behind the wheel of a shiny red Ferrari Testarossa in a competition that tests the nerves and driving skills of even the coolest road hogs.

In a more 'uplifting' vein there's the shoot 'em up **Thunderblade**, reviewed in Issue Four. Thunderblade's 3D action has you piloting an attack chopper through an assortment of hazard-filled landscapes occupied by wave after wave of aggressive airborne enemies.

The package is rounded off with the athletic antics of **Strider** (see Review in Issue Twelve), the far out shoot 'em up **Forgotten Worlds** (see Review in Issue Nine) and the race 'n' blaster **Last Duel** (see Review in Issue Eight).

Power Crash will be available in December at a price yet to be announced.

Amiga and Atari ST owners need not feel left out in the cold though. US Gold has yet another compilation especially for you. The **Platinum** collection comprises some of US Gold's finest CapCom conversions. **Black Tiger**, Forgotten Worlds, Strider, and **Ghouls 'n' Ghosts** have all been squeezed into one box, available now for just £24.99.

HOT SHOT

THE CONVERSIONS of CapCom's arcade shoot 'em up Mercs **for US Gold are in the capable hands of Tiertex. Having recently completed** Strider II **(also for US Gold), the boys have only just begun work on this one. A release date has yet to be set. Meanwhile, CapCom's superlative beat 'em up** Final Fight **is in the capable hands of Creative Materials, along with Sega's** Line Of Fire.

A SPECIAL VAXINE

LOOK OUT for a special edition of US Gold and The Assembly Line's Vaxine **on a software shelf near you soon. They shouldn't be difficult to miss – they come in a round metal tin! As a special bonus, random copies of the special edition contain an 'extra prize-winning opportunity' that promises over £5000 in free software to the lucky winner!**

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WHAT THE STARS ARE PLAYING

ARC DEVELOPMENTS

SO WHAT'S proving popular with the **Predator 2** 'converters'? Well, **Datastorm** is the current hit of the month, with all of the Walsall wonders being totally engrossed in VDT's classy **Defender** clone. Apart from that it's pretty much all quiet on the Midland front. Graftgold's conversions of **Rainbow Islands** are still very much in vogue, particularly with graphic artist John Harrison. The rest of the leisure time has been taken up playtesting the boys' own games, including **Dragon Breed** and two mystery projects for two mystery companies.

CORE DESIGN

IT'S ALL ACTION up at Core's Derby HQ – so much so that it's a wonder the lads ever get time to release any software. Bob Gough's big hit of the month is the shoot' em up **Final Blaster** on the PC Engine, which he says has been "doing my head in", and **Overdrive** in the arcade down the road – "it's tops," he says. Chris Long's also been battling with the PC Engine and the shoot 'em up **W-Ring**, while Simon Phipps has been strutting his stuff with **Strider** on the Sega MegaDrive – "It's the business". Meanwhile, Rob Toone has been happily playing **Car-Vup** "'cos he wrote it". As for the big cheeses, Richard Barclay has also been tinkering with Car-Vup, while Jeremy Smith has finally completed **Super MarioLand** on the GameBoy – only to be rewarded with a "crap end sequence".

SPECIAL FX

HAVING just finished off **RoboCop 2**, those lovable Liverpool lads have been doing more than their fair share of stick waggling this month. Charles and Ivan Davis (no relation) have been battling away with Anco's **Kick Off 2**, while Infogrames' civil war simulator **North And South** has been doing the business for Colin Rushby. It's been a bit of a golden oldies month actually, with top dog Paul Finnegan playing **Leaderboard**, new acquisition Samantha Lyons enjoying **Super Hang-On** and just about everyone getting the benefits of their new **Mr Do** arcade machine in a suitcase (the team is currently converting Mr Do to the GameBoy, you see). And on top of all that, they have been playtesting RoboCop 2 as well.

THE BITMAP BROTHERS

WITH **SPEEDBALL II** nearing completion, much of the team's time has been spent playtesting that, so they can iron out any bugs in the system – and there have been a few. However, Mike Montgomery has squeezed some spare time to play The One's single-ship preview of **Paradroid 90**. And he's been impressed: "It's brilliant. I wish I'd played the original at the time." The Bitmap's new member Shaun Montgomery (no relation) has been exploring Mindscape's **Captive**. Also causing merriment for the boys, and Mike in particular, is the sliding-block extravaganza **Puzznic** on the Nintendo Entertainment System. But apart from that, there's been little time for leisure.

VIVID IMAGE DEVELOPMENTS

MICROSTYLE'S **Rick Dangerous II** has kept VID big cheeses Mev Dinc and John Twiddy happy for past month or so. "It's very good," they say. Neither of them has managed to complete it, but only because the reason they are playing Rick II is to put it on a Commodore 64 cartridge. Raffaele Cecco on the other hand has been so busy programming First Samurai that it's the only thing he's had the time to play.

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ADIDAS TIE BREAK	18.90	18.90	–
ALTERED BEAST	12.99	12.99	–
ANARCHY	17.99	–	–
ANTHEADS (DATA DISK)	12.99	–	–
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AQUANAUT	18.90	–	–
ARMALYTE	16.99	16.99	–
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GET ACTIVE!

WELL LOOKY HERE! Not only do we offer you the opportunity to while away the hours with a software-related quiz – you also stand to win some software and T-Shirts! In all three sections, the first correct entry drawn after the closing date of December 28th 1990 wins its sender the prizes. Send all your answers to GET ACTIVE!, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

LOGLINES

We all know and love them – those catchy 'teasers' that software advertising uses to draw you in. But how well do you pay attention to them? Here are five 'loglines' from adverts that have appeared in The One over the last six months. For £50 worth of software and an exclusive The One T-Shirt, all you have to do is name the games these lines promoted...

1) "We're fit, we're alive, but we're not back home."

2) "This is our idea of a sport. Don't blink."

3) "Fly in the face of danger."

4) "Radar can't detect it – but it's coming..."

5) "Curiouser and Curiouser"

WORDSEARCH

There are 10 Ocean games to be found in this 15 x 15 grid. And there's £100 worth of Ocean software up for grabs! We won't tell you what the titles are – that's for you to find out, but we will tell you that not all are necessarily new games. Perhaps a browse through some back issues of The One would be helpful...

R	O	B	D	E	L	O	R	T	A	P	T	S	O	L
O	S	T	O	P	V	O	Y	A	G	E	R	T	E	H
B	T	E	T	K	L	F	I	O	T	E	B	A	V	S
O	H	G	S	A	G	R	N	A	L	S	N	D	L	N
C	E	O	N	E	H	I	C	O	R	T	O	F	K	A
O	L	B	E	A	C	H	V	O	L	L	E	Y	F	M
P	O	R	K	N	A	C	E	D	I	K	F	W	H	T
F	E	R	A	S	I	V	T	V	Z	J	O	C	E	A
L	E	U	E	R	L	Q	A	W	N	D	R	E	D	B
B	A	H	A	C	A	B	E	D	I	T	F	R	O	D
I	Q	R	O	O	B	J	H	Z	T	Z	C	U	M	H
R	J	S	Y	N	A	O	D	E	A	M	B	G	D	E
O	O	U	X	E	C	N	E	S	N	E	R	A	N	T
P	B	A	A	D	I	A	R	Y	N	G	A	Y	L	L
O	E	A	N	P	L	A	T	O	O	N	G	L	A	L

CRYPTIC QUIZ

How much do you really know about games and the people who produce them? Your knowledge could be worth £50 worth of software and a The One T-Shirt if you use it to answer these 5 not-so-simple questions...

1) With which French software house is Richard Clayderman often associated?

2) Before Bullfrog turned to games development it produced a music package. What was it called?

3) What was the name of Special FX's first ever 16-bit project – which was never released?

4) In Cinemaware's **It Came From The Desert**, which town is under threat from a plague of mutant ants?

5) **Quartz** programmer Paul Shirley has a degree in... what?



SERGEANT SOFTWARE!

YES FOLKS! The most generous man in the known universe teams up with your super soaraway One! Sergeant Software hails from the planet Lig, and his mission in life is to bring fun and enjoyment through free software to all those who are struggling to obtain it. The Sergeant's not here to dish out luxuries, but software to those in need. So, if you think you are a deserving cause, why not drop the Sarge a line? Write to SERGEANT SOFTWARE, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU. And don't forget to include your full name and address and telephone number. The Sergeant has already been inundated with hundreds of pleas for help from needy The One readers. Here's a selection from the sacks of mail he receives...

Dear Sergeant Software,
I am a 13 year old boy, and my favourite thing is my Amiga. Unfortunately I only earn £7.50 a week from my paper round, and so I can only afford to buy a new game every month or so. I know this doesn't sound very needy, but the other week I rushed out to buy a new game (**Dynasty Wars**), and when I got home I left it on the kitchen chair while I got changed. But when I came back downstairs, I found that my dog Rufus has eaten the box and ruined the disk! I was so sad I nearly cried, and now I have to save up for another six weeks again. Can you help?
Darren Rushby, Middlesex
SARGE SAYS: Don't worry – I checked with your mother and she said this was true, so a new copy of Dynasty Wars is on its way to you free of charge. But be more careful this time!

Dear Sergeant Software,
I recently bought a copy of **F-19 Stealth Fighter** for the PC from MicroProse. Unfortunately I've lost the manual, and when I asked my local software shop they refused to replace it. This means of course that I can't get past the copy protection, so I would be very grateful if you could send a copy to me so that I can play it.
Mark Trout, Clydebank, Scotland
SARGE SAYS: Lost your manual! Lost your marbles more like! You can't fool me – I know a software pirate when I see one! I shall be forwarding your name and address to the Federation Against Software Theft immediately!

Dear Sergeant Software,
I recently sold my age-old Commodore 64 and put the proceeds towards buying a new Commodore Amiga 500. I've now got the new machine and I'm very pleased with it. The only problem is I can't afford to buy any software! When I had a 64, all the games were about a tenner each. I can't afford to spend 25 quid each on a game – not at the moment anyway, with my funds drained after buying the Amiga. My Amiga is currently sitting in the corner waiting for a game to play. Please help me!
Sid Markham, Billingsgate, London
SARGE SAYS: Fear not, Sid. I know how hard it can be getting together some software after buying a new machine. And because everyone deserves a fair start, I'm sending you £250 worth of choice Amiga software. Happy playing!

Santa Claus probably conjures up warm memories of yuletides past, with smiling children opening toy laden presents. And as well he might, for the so called 'Saint' Nicholas has been a firm bastion of family life for hundreds of years. But there's a sinister side to the rosy-cheeked Father Christmas, beloved by so many children and adults alike. This month, only in The One, we reveal the true story behind Santa Claus, pulling back the curtains on the sordid twilight world of sleaze he inhabits.

'SANTA'S A RIGHT BASTARD'

A The One Exclusive by Gary Liddon

WITH SOME PLASTIC pointed ears and a red hat with a bell on top I managed to infiltrate Santa's lair after answering an advert for helpers at his famous Lapland Grotto.

I was interviewed by Santa himself at a nearby pub. Dressed in red tracksuit bottoms and a club 18-30 T-Shirt he didn't resemble the jovial, roly-poly figure loved by so many small children around the world.

As he ordered two drinks he told me: "All that rubbish? Well, the kiddies like it, don't they. I can't stand that crap meself. Or kids really. Me and Mrs Claus never really bothered with kids. To tell you the truth I never really bothered with Mrs Claus."

At this point he leaned across to me, squeezed my knee and winked. I hastily explained that I was married and my wife was expecting a child.

He hates "the little bleeders".

He went on: "Oh well, whatever takes your fancy. Live and let live, that's what I say. You could go a long way as an elf – you've got a nice set of ears."

Quickly changing the subject I went on to discuss what my duties as little elf helper would be.

Santa revealed: "Well, obviously you'd be down on the shop floor. We've got a good range of teddies that needing work on – we need some workers to sharpen up the pins that hold the eyes. They've got to come out easily to make them as dangerous as possible for small children. What happens is we knock the stuff out at Christmas and then not long after some silly little sod will get himself cut up on them. Then you get a big stink on Watchdog so all the teddies get recalled and we have to pay out to all the people who bought 'em. The clever bit is that we've got credit insurance and we claim all the lost money. Then we offload all the dicky teddies to third world countries where no-one gives a tinker's cuss about small children eating razor sharp filings."

I asked how long this had been going on and why no one had made a stink about it. Santa replied: "It's been going on for years... The teddies whose heads come off and leave a razor sharp shard of metal pointing out, that was me. This year we're designing a similar model stuffed with highly poisonous foam, the sort they use to kill rats with. You see, it's good for everyone. We make on it, the shops make on it, and Lyne Faulds Wood has got something to go on about."

"It's all one big insurance scam, see," he boasts.

Santa ordered another two drinks and the conversation turned back to my duties.

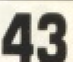
"Yeah, you should do very well," he said. "The pay's not bad – about 40 quid a week, and you get all the yule logs you can eat."

I said that I'd be in touch and left the pub. Later that day I went to Santa's home and revealed myself to be a reporter from The One. He became abusive and claimed: "It was all a bit of a laugh".

I was then driven off his property by an angry gnome holding two vicious reindeer on a leash.

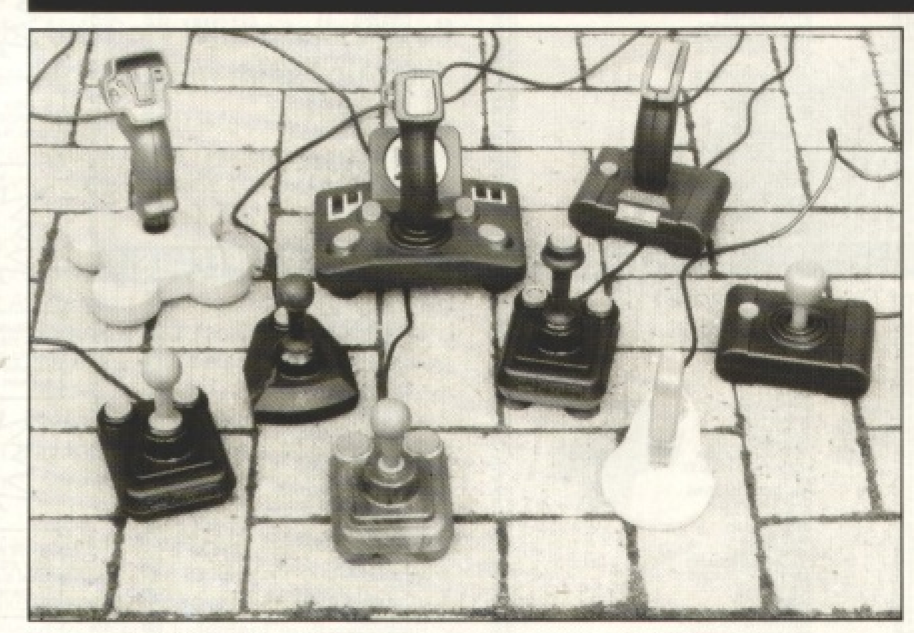
We spoke to a Chief Inspector Spoon who was very interested in the file we had compiled on Father Christmas. He said: "That's interesting. You can be sure we'll be in touch with you very soon".

And Remember: Our Lawyers Are Watching!



In the first of a new regular news feature we look at all that's brightest and best in fun-related hardware. So, if you need a few extra bits to stick on your Christmas list for this year, then look no further than the tasty line-up below. Simply highlight the sexiest bits with a fluorescent marker and give it to your granny to read.

IT'S HARD!



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT... (Top Row): Quickjoy Jetfighter, Quickjoy V Superboard, Flashfire. (Middle Row): The Arcade, Prof 9000 Deluxe, Bep Bop. (Bottom Row): Prof Competition 9000, Competition Pro 5000, Shureshot Standard DIY.

JOYSTICK JURY

This month we took no less than nine different joysticks and put them through the ultimate test: days of rigorous Kick Off 2. **Here's how they stood up to the strain...**

QUICKJOY JETFIGHTER Spectravideo **£13.95** The strange shape of this joystick makes it very uncomfortable to hold in the palm of the hand, so it's fortunate that there are four suction cups to fix it firmly to the table top. It does have a comfortable pistol grip with buttons for the trigger finger and the thumb. The hand grip also houses buttons to switch on the auto-fire and control its speed. Jetfighter has a fairly sturdy feel to it and a positive action.

QUICKJOY V SUPERBOARD Spectravideo **£17.95** This is the joystick equivalent of Jimmy Saville's chair, with enough gadgets to keep everyone happy. There are no less than six fire buttons, though unfortunately you must select whether you use the top or bottom buttons via a switch, so you can't just change over when one hand gets tired. The autofire option is easily accessed with the thumb, and there are three possible speeds. The most unusual addition to this stick is the stopwatch which runs from a small 1.5 volt dry cell — handy for learning sequences that involve timing. The stick has a nice heavy action, and should stand up to many hours of play.

FLASHFIRE Euromax **£9.95** Not at all bad this one, but a little work is required to get the best out of it. The shape makes it awkward and uncomfortable to hold in the palm of the hand, and there's only a left-hand firebutton on the base. It's responsive enough though, and should last the distance.

THE ARCADE Euromax **£17.95** This stick has a lovely shape, making it very comfortable to hold. A central firebutton accommodates left and right handed players. You can't really fault this stick. It has an excellent all-round feel, and it's solid as a rock. Definitely one for the collection.

COMPETITION PRO 5000 (With Autofire) Kempston **£16.49 (Plus £1.20 Postage)** One of the best sticks around has been given a new lease of life and a lick of paint. This latest version comes in camouflage colours (perfect for playing **Operation Wolf**). It's well 'ard and should look good plugged into any self-respecting machine. Dynamic is currently planning a second stick in this range, possibly called Desert Rat, which will have sand-coloured camouflage.

WHERE TO GET 'EM

SPECTRAVIDEO
Unit 27, Northfield Industrial Estate, Beresford Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 1NU. Tel: (081) 900 0024.

EUROMAX
Bessingby Industrial Estate, Bridlington, North Humberside. Tel: (0262) 601006.

SONMAX
Unit 21, Parkside Industrial Estate, Edge Lane Street, Royton, Nr Oldham, Lancs OL2 6DS. Tel: (061) 628 2013.

DYNAMIC MARKETING LTD
Coin House, New Coin Street, Royton, Nr Oldham, Lancs OL2 6JZ. Tel: (061) 626 7222.

VIRGIN GAMES
16 Portland Road, London W11 4LA. Tel: (071) 727 9070.

BEP BOP Euromax **£6.95** This wide and short stick feels very floppy, although it's comfortable enough to hold. Once again there's only a left-hand firebutton on the base. It's not the most responsive of sticks, and its lasting ability is questionable. Still, it does represent good value for money.

PROF COMPETITION 9000 Euromax **£15.95** Its shape isn't suitable for small hands to hold, but it feels supreme. There are left and right firebuttons to cater for all players. The stick is quick to respond and feels very solid. It has evidently been built to last. All in all, a top quality stick.

PROF 9000 DELUXE (With Adjustable Rapid-Fire) Euromax **£32.95** This is very much like its less posh brother, only with a special autofire function. The left-hand firebutton is depressed and rotated to determine the rate of autofire. It's not a cheap stick, but it is one of the best money can buy.

SURESHOT STANDARD (DIY) Sonmax **£7.95 (Including Postage & Packing)** If you want a cheap joystick that will stand up to a bit of a bashing then the Shureshot standard is as good a bet as any. This version comes in a kit form at a couple of quid cheaper than the ready-built version. The stick is easily put together in about 15 minutes, providing you follow the clear instruction sheet. The resulting stick does feel a bit loose, but it's responsive and durable enough for the price. A fun way to acquire an inexpensive stick.

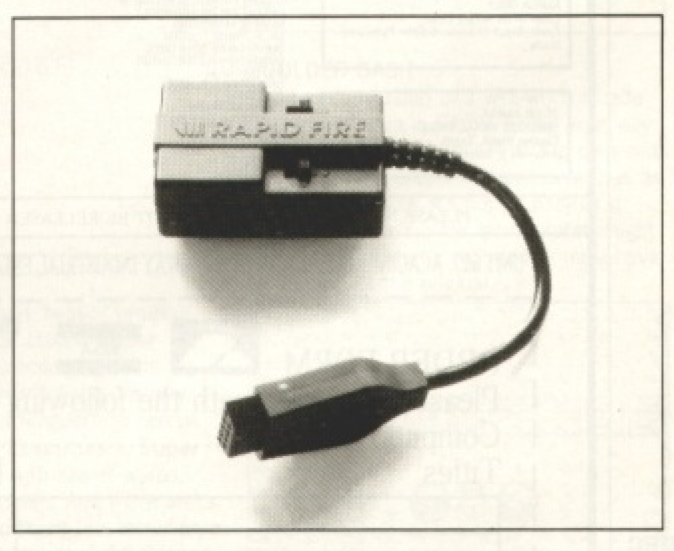
SEGA AUTOFIRE UNIT Virgin Games **£5.99** Here's a handy little peripheral for anyone who has a problem pressing joystick firebuttons at speed but doesn't have a joystick with an autofire function. The Sega Autofire unit is made for the Sega console. However, it also works with the Amiga and Atari ST. You plug you joystick into the unit, and then the unit into the required joystick port. A pair of switches activate the autofire. It's compatible with most software (you should see the screen when it's used with **Xenon 2: Megablast**).

VENI VIDI VICI!

HOW MANY TIMES have you seen demos with digitised pictures of your favourite stars and wished you could produce something similar? Well here's a nifty little number to make that dream a reality: a compact hardware and software combination from Rombo called **Vidi Amiga**.

The hardware slots neatly between a video recorder and the Amiga's parallel slot, with a lead stuck into joystick Port Two drawing power for the unit. Now all you have to do is boot up the software, activate the video from which you wish to grab a frame, and away you go... A press of the mouse button pulls off the last 16 frames from the video, though there is a split-second gap between grabs.

Now all you have to do is choose your favourite digitised still from a screen full of miniatures and save it out for future use. You could even load your digitised work into an art package and touch it up.



Even though Vidi Amiga only produces monochrome images, it's inexpensive for this sort of thing and represents great value at £114.95. It's not too difficult to use, though it must be said the manual isn't sympathetic enough for beginners. A colour upgrade is available from Rombo for only £19.95. You can contact Rombo on (0506) 414631. The address is: Rombo Ltd, 6 Fairbairn Road, Kirkton North, Livingston, Scotland EH54 6TS.

YOU HAVE TO HAND IT TO THEM

Now that the GameBoy is at last officially available in the UK, Gary Whitta tells you all you need to know. And a few thing you don't.

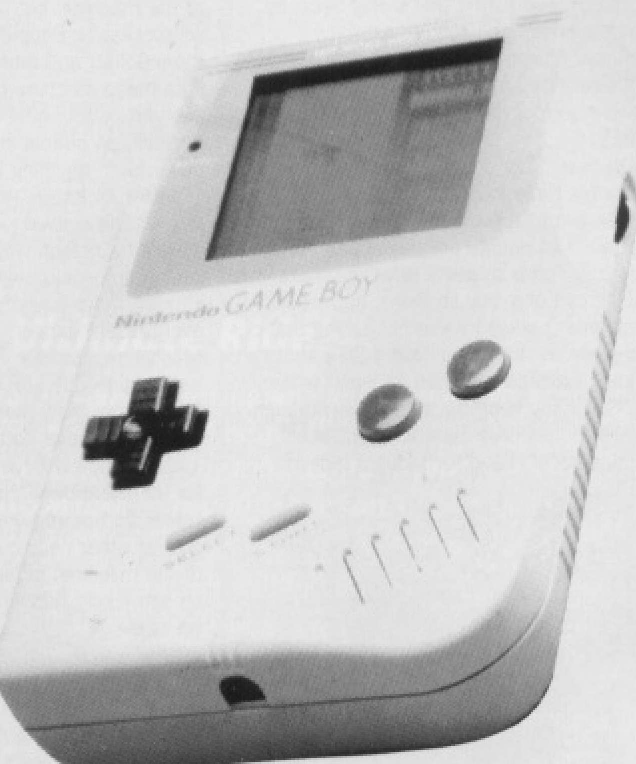
IT'S ALL VERY WELL having a six-foot tall tower of buttons, knobs and musical power at home, but what happens when you go out on the streets and fancy some tunes, eh? You get your Walkman out, that's what.

The same theory now applies to the world of computer gaming, with Nintendo's GameBoy providing the ideal accessory for your Amiga, Atari ST, or PC. For just £69.99, you can now get addicted to such classics as **Tetris**, **Nemesis** and **Paperboy** — on the bus, under your bed, in the street... almost anywhere.

We say 'almost', because Nintendo's promise of "There's nowhere you can't play it" isn't strictly true. Perhaps the line should read "There's nowhere you can't play it — unless it's dark."

That said, in Japan you can already buy a clip-on lamp and magnifying glass that allows you to play in subdued light. Hopefully it will make an appearance over here before too long.

Anyway, we decided to reserve judgment on the GameBoy ourselves, preferring to let the professionals, in the form of developers and publishers, air their views instead. There's also a quick round-up of what you can play on the mini-marvel. So here we go...

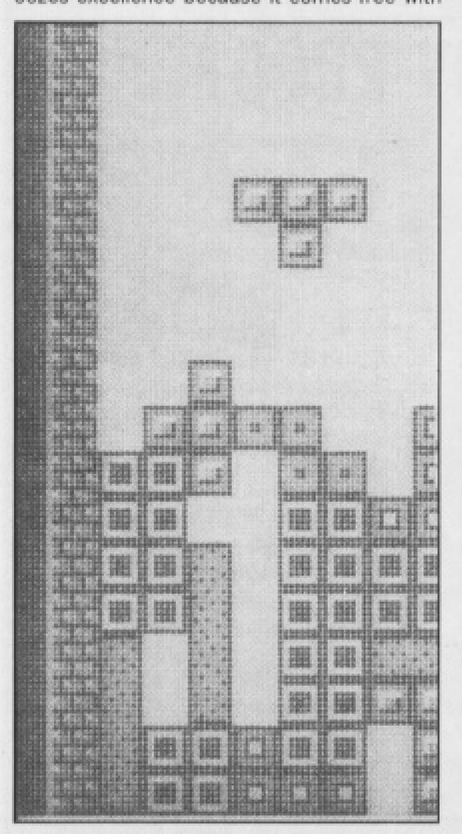


THE GAMES

AT PRESENT there are only six GameBoy titles available in the UK from Nintendo — but that's only the official number. By shopping around you can get your hands on dozens of cartridges imported from the USA and Japan, but you do have to pay well over the RRP of £19.99 apiece for the privilege.

TETRIS

THE GameBoy classic. If you bought an official UK GameBoy, or have an American import, you won't need to be told why Tetris oozes excellence because it comes free with the system. If you happen to be a naughty Japanese system owner however, you may not know because it doesn't come as part of the basic package. Don't worry — you can still buy it as a separate title, and you'd be well advised to do so. This is undoubtedly the best version of Alexey Pazhitnov's near-ultimate test of dexterity, with improved control, more play options and better music than you get on any other format. It's also an ideal portable piece of entertainment, as the gameplay is perfectly suited to impulsive five-minute sessions. It's an effective relaxation tool too. With a brilliant head-to-head two player option, Tetris is a strong candidate for the most addictive game ever. There's no excuse for not having this.



TENNIS

Arguably the best simulation of Tennis there is — and this is about as simple as it gets too. Pseudo two-dimensional players battle it out on a 'more' two dimensional court, but it's not the technical achievements that count here. Tennis is a right laugh, and it's not just hitting it back and forth until somebody gets bored and misses — there's plenty of room for tactics and play with a variety of devious shots available. As with most link-up games, this one's twice as much fun against a second human player.

GOLF

A simplistic sports simulation. It's not exactly **PGA Tour Golf**, but it manages to entertain all the same. There's a fair bit of the old skill involved when it comes to timing swings and selecting the correct club, but when all's said and don it's a bit limited.

QIX

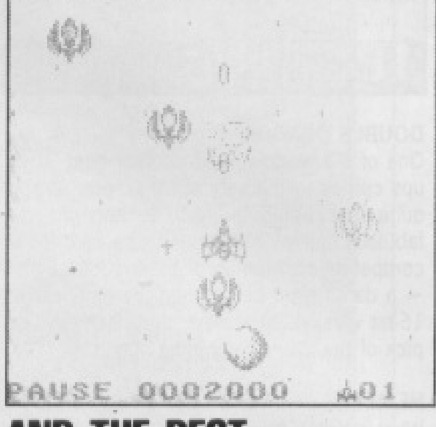
Converted from Taito's ancient arcade classic, **Qix** has spawned many a clone across just about every format from the humble Spectrum to the PC Engine. Those who believe that the original is still the best will love this conversion though, as it's faithful to the original. The idea's simple — draw boxes around the screen to fill in more than 75 per cent while avoiding the marauding and the evil Qix along the way. A trifle slow-paced for the liking of some, but enjoyable all the same.

SUPERMARIOLAND

Basically a cut-down and 'heavily tweaked version of the Nintendo classic **Super Mario Brothers**. It's scrolling platform frolics all the way as Mario fights his way through the Mushroom Kingdom to rescue the fair princess. Like its precursor, **Super MarioLand** is packed with secret warps, hidden rooms and bonuses. And there are a few original features in there too, including a horizontally scrolling aerial dogfight! Second only to Tetris in the 'must get' stakes.

SOLAR STRIKER

The seemingly obligatory vertically-scrolling shoot 'em up with lots of aliens to shoot — and not a lot else. It's all very predictable, but tough to play and, for the button-pushing freaks among you at least, worth a second look.



AND THE REST...

A SELECTION of presently 'unofficial' titles that are now available in this country — provided you are willing to shop around.

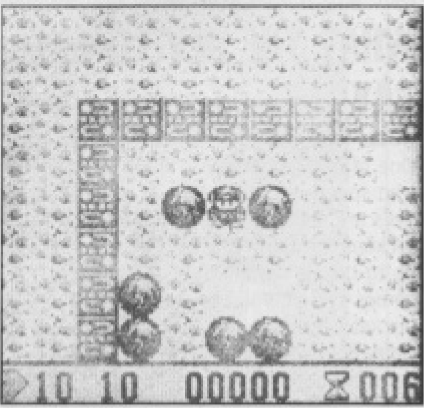
BATMAN

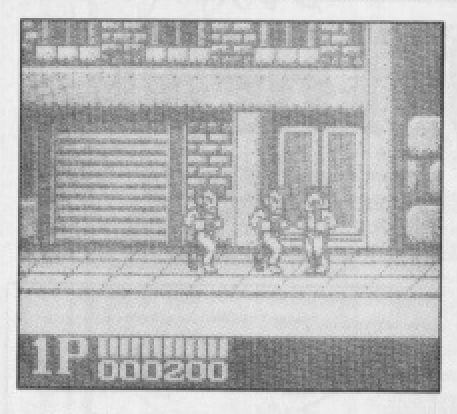
The game of the film. It's all very similar to MarioLand in the sense that a diminutive hero leaps about from platform to platform — only this one's in pursuit of the Joker. There's also a shoot 'em up orientated Batwing section, and it's all rounded off with what is probably the best GameBoy music yet heard. **Batman**'s not exactly spectacular, but it comes recommended all the same.



BOULDER DASH

Another conversion of a well-worn arcade classic. The idea is simple — dig your way around a maze and collect all the diamonds, avoiding the boulders and bad creatures as you go. Of course, it's not as easy as it sounds — there's a fair bit of aforethought and arcade dexterity required. A must-have for all fans of the original.





DOUBLE DRAGON
One of the world's most popular beat 'em ups comes to the very small screen. And quite successfully too, with buckets of fabulous fightin' 'n' fumpin' to be had. It's a competent conversion of the arcade original – a damn sight better than the half-hearted 16-bit versions at least – and definitely the pick of the GameBoy biffing bunch.

NEMESIS
What a doozy this one is. Everyone reckons it's the best home computer conversion of Konami's ace arcade blaster there is. And it's true. NES owners will know it as **Gradius**, but **Nemesis** will be the only word on their lips when they get to see this GameBoy version.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES
Is there no escape? Now you can even play with them on the tube! This incarnation of the green geeks is straightforward horizontally-scrolling martial arts action. Controlling the turtle of your choice, you smack your way through five levels full of ninjas in a bid to rescue April from the clutches of Shredder. Impressive graphics and a selection of catchy tunes combine with adequate gameplay to make this one worth getting – if you can stand losing your street-cred by being seen playing it.

COMING SOON...

CHASE HQ
Taito's bump 'n' blaster gets a new lease of life. And it's looking good.

KLAX
Atari Games' perky 'puzzler' goes monochrome. How it plays without the colour remains to be seen.

MR DO
One of the original – and the best. Should convert very well to the GameBoy.

ROBOCOP
The Kevlar-coated copper is back, in yet another guise. It's all pretty much the same as the home computer versions, only (surprisingly) more playable.

WHAT THE DEVELOPERS SAY

BULLFROG
One of Bullfrog's biggest cheeses and a man who spends so much time in Japan that his eyes are shutting up shop, Peter Molyneux reckons the GameBoy isn't all it's cracked up to be. He says: "The idea of having a games system you can carry around in your pocket is brilliant, but I don't think the GameBoy fully realises the concept's potential."

It's the screen that's the problem, Pete goes on to explain: "You have to really contort your head in order to see the screen, the monochrome doesn't really work and the LCD display isn't fast enough. On the plus side, certain types of games, like puzzle games, work really well on the GameBoy. But I think that's only because puzzle games don't require as much technical muscle as arcade games, and that's reflected in the fact that there are many more puzzle games than arcade ones."

Oh dear. Pete doesn't see that much of a future for Nintendo's baby. "I'll give it a year, maybe two," he reckons. "It doesn't matter that loads of people are developing for the machine. There so many titles out there, but people can only buy so many, and when companies realise they're not selling that many games, they'll pull out. I think that's already started to happen in Japan where the GameBoy is on the wane, even though the cartridges cost the equivalent of six pounds each!" Food for thought indeed...

THE BITMAP BROTHERS
Bros head honcho Eric Matthews takes a more optimistic view of the machine. He says: "I think it's great. The games produced for the machine are very playable – I saw **Spider-Man** the other day and that's excellent – and with Nintendo behind it, I can't see how it can really fail. The Lynx is certainly no competition."

The only downside that Eric can see is the machine's relative lack of technical power restricting developers. But does Bros itself have any plans along those lines? "I don't know. I was thinking about the idea of **Speedball** on the GameBoy the other day, and I reckon that as long as you could keep the speed up and retain the playability, it'd be really good. It's not something we're seriously thinking about at the moment though. We shall see..."

SENSIBLE SOFTWARE
The boys behind **Wizball** and **International 3D Tennis** must have just got out of bed when we rang. "It's just like a ZX81 with buttons on," they said. And do they see any future for the machine? "No." Fair enough...

GRAFTGOLD
Paradroid 90 programmer Andrew Braybrook's only had a quick look at the GameBoy, but he was impressed by what he saw. He says: "I was very impressed by Batman, and the speed that it shifts at. I'm not very familiar with the technical workings of the machine, but I'm surprised it's been so successful. People always seem to want more colour and more power, and then this little mono machine comes along and everyone wants one! I think that's because it's such an oddball machine, and there's never been anything like it before."

As for its future, Andrew believes that as long as the software support keeps going, there's no reason why it shouldn't be successful – although the promise of smaller, more powerful machines is an ever-present danger. "My portable CD player, which I bought four years ago, needed 10 batteries to operate, and they only lasted for 20 minutes. Now there's one out that runs for hours off one battery!"

Does Andrew have any plans to develop for the GameBoy? "Not really. I'm really into colour and power, you see. I've got nothing against other people converting my games to the machine. In fact I think there might be something happening with **Paradroid** as we speak..."

SPECIAL FX
"We all like it here," says SFX supremo Paul Finnegan. And it's a good job too, considering the team behind **Midnight Resistance** and **RoboCop 2** has a GameBoy title, **Mr Do**, under development for Ocean right now. And there are plans for more.

"I think it's going to be successful," says Paul. "There are so many playable games for it, and with Nintendo's muscle behind it it might be too late for anyone else to come up with a rival portable."

What about the machine's technical constraints though? "Well, it's difficult to know at the moment. I think, as with any new machine, we need to push it further before we can see what it will really do."

Paul reckons that the state of the software available now isn't all that hot, although he believes that the potential is there for some really mind-blowing titles. "It's going to do well," Paul concludes, "especially over Christmas, where a lot of kids are starting to hear about it through word-of-mouth. Even my kid wants one now..."

OCEAN
Software Development boss Gary Bracey has high hopes for the GameBoy – and so does his employer, considering that it has no less than four titles, including **RoboCop**, hitting the market in the immediate future.

"It's a wonderful machine," he says. "I take mine all over the place." That said, Bracey describes the current software as a bit hit and miss, "but then the games are not designed to be sophisticated. GameBoy games are supposed to be played on the bus, or the train, so there's no time to get involved with a game like **SimEarth** or **Populous**."

As for the threat from the future's more powerful machines, Bracey isn't worried, and is quick to point out the need for extra batteries and bigger, heavier casings. "I think the GameBoy will evolve. It's created a niche market, and it's not going to just go away."

GARY LIDDON
Freelance programmer Liddon, responsible for such classics as Firebird's **Ricochet** and the Nintendo version of **The Last Ninja II**, thinks the GameBoy is "a little cracker".

Roly-poly technopornographer Gazza reckons that Nintendo's miniature marvel is capable of some "right smashing games. Probably." But he doesn't think the full potential of the GameBoy has been fully realised as yet. "I don't think the full potential of the GameBoy has been fully realised as yet," says the curvy 23-year-old former NES wizard.

As for the existing software, our Gaz reckons that some of it's good, but some of it isn't. So will the machine take off? "Probably. Then again, probably not. You never know these days. It's a topsy-turvy old world, and there's nowt as queer as folk."

GAMEBOY 2000?

WE ASKED some of the leading names in science today to predict what the GameBoy would be like in the year 2000.

"It will be called GameBoy 2000, be very small and run on solar energy," says Doctor Quentin Bender of Cambridge University. "It will have no screen – instead it will project the googolplex-colour 5D graphics and million-channel sound directly into the user's brain using some kind of laser ray or beam or something."

Electrodes attached to the brain via the ears will allow the player to control the action using thought waves, and the quality of the digitised sound will be at least 12 times better than the real thing. And it will probably have some three gigabytes, give or take a bit or two, of CD-I in it as well, so you can really live that movie!

Scientists at NASA believe that soon GameBoy computer technology will be more advanced than the multi-billion dollar super-computers they currently use to identify dead pulsars in space, so you can look forward to some really Advanced Computer Entertainment.

But what kind of games will you be playing? Educational Psychologist Bill Tongue predicts that the GameBoy games of the future will be so advanced that people of low intellect and respiratory difficulties could suffer strokes and even death brought on by "excessive thrill power".

Doctors also predict that the games will be so realistic that GameBoy 2000 players may have trouble differentiating between GameBoy 2000 games and real life. As such, all prospective GameBoy 2000 owners must pass a rigorous medical examination before they can earn themselves a GameBoy 2000 licence.

Popular characters Mario and Luigi are to be phased out to make way for futuristic robotic characters called MAR-I-OX V and LOO-E-G IV, who will have two heads, 12 arms, rocket boots, and different attachments to help them out of any gameplay eventuality.

So, you can look forward to fully-3D, sampled sound, virtual reality, CD-I, leisure-filled gameplaying experience in the year 2000! The only problem is the price: 5,000 pounds – in space money!



THE ULTIMATE
Ride
Open up the throttle for 'The Ultimate Ride'
Tame your dream machine in the Ultimate bike racing challenge-The Ultimate Ride brings two wheeled action hurtling into your living room at its raw, nerve tingling best.
Take six of the best superbikes and race them on a world tour of the famous grand prix circuits. If the open road is more to your liking the you can take it "country style" on six fiendishly designed road courses set in different locations.
The Ultimate Ride even lets you design your own course using the unique Artificial Intelligence track editor. Challenge a friend on the simultaneous two player option or create custom disks of your favourite track and bike.
The Ultimate Ride combines ultra fast road racing graphics with unequalled presentation and animation- This is a real interactive racing movie.
Can you take the power?
MINDSCAPE
Actual screen shots
WINNER'S CIRCLE
1ST PLACE: STEVE
2ND PLACE: COMPUTER RIDER
3RD PLACE: COMPUTER RIDER
Ninja
ENGINE DISPLACEMENT: 1000cc
MAXIMUM SPEED: 170 MPH
1/4 MILE: 10.68 SEC AT 130.00 MPH
SUMMARY
ACCELERATION :EXCELLENT
HANDLING :EXCELLENT
RESPONSE :FAIR
BRAKES :FAIR
MAKE: KAWASAKI NINJA ZX-10
MINDSCAPE
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For further information on Mindscape products and new releases please call: 0898 234214



'SCUSE ME WHILE I KISS THE SKY...



WIN! A GOLDEN AXE!

Courtesy Of Virgin Games



IF YOU READ magazines in a funny way you will already have seen just how good Virgin Games' conversions of **Golden Axe** are. Everyone else should turn to page 79 and absorb the four far out fact-filled pages about this prize hack 'n' slash 'em up. And speaking of prize, there's a Jim Dandy one up for grabs here. So chuffed with Golden Axe is Virgin Games that it's keen to celebrate by way of this competition. As you can see, said prize is a rather impressive electric guitar (though not the actual one shown here), better known in guitar-playing circles as an 'axe'. Virgin's also chucking in a tin of gold spray paint, so you really could have a wicked Golden Axe on your hands. But don't fret if you can't hack it with an axe, man: there's a book for beginners thrown in for good measure. All you have to do is answer the three questions on this page, then scribble the answers on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope and send it to AXE THE WAY TO DO IT, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, to arrive no later than the 28th of December 1990. The first completely correct entry drawn after the closing date wins its sender the axe and decorative enhancer. The next 10 correct entries drawn earn their senders a vibrant Virgin Games T-Shirt each.



THE RULES

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Employees and associated parties of EMAP Images and Virgin Games are not eligible for entry.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE GUITAR ON OFFER IN THIS COMPETITION IS NOT SHOWN HERE

THE THREE QUESTIONS

1) Who sang **Careful With That Axe Eugene**?

A) Pink Floyd
B) Keith Floyd
C) Floyd Patterson

2) What's the name of the corky 16-bit console for which a conversion of Golden Axe is available? Here's a clue: it's called the Genesis in the States, and Virgin markets it in this country under a different name.

A) The Sega MegaDrive
B) The Sega MasterDrive
C) The Sega MegaSystem

3) What colour is the magical axe in Golden Axe?

A) Gold
B) Silver
C) Bronze


CHRONICLES OF OMEGA
A MAGICAL QUEST WHERE GOOD...
In the far off land of Omega, the peaceful existence of its people is thrown into panic as the jealous forces of evil abduct the children one by one. Hate and unhappiness spreads throughout the land until a fateful mistake is made .... one of the magical twins – Alvin and Irma – is taken captive.
...CLASHES WITH EVIL...?
As the remaining seventh twin of a seventh child, your desperate quest brings you in conflict with the footsoldiers and Champion Warriors of the Evil Demon. Aided by the kindness of the Good Witch and your own mystical powers, battle your way to the Demon Castle for the final encounter and ultimate freedom for your twin and friends.
Screenshots from ATARI ST
ATARI ST & AMIGA £19.99
ARC
REACH OUT FOR THE POWER
Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.
REACH OUT FOR THE POWER OF ARC
ATARI ST · CBM AMIGA
ARC, P.O. Box 555, Slough SL2 5BZ.

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CBM Amiga.
Atari ST.

U.S. Gold Ltd., Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 625 3366.

Hunter

Laurence Scotford experiences transports of delight with Activision's novel new action adventure.

HOW OFTEN DOES a new piece of software appear and promise to deliver a totally new and convincing environment? And how often we are disappointed... But here is one that goes quite some way towards fulfilling that promise. **Hunter** is a sabotage and combat 'adventure' set in a huge 3D world. We have seen plenty of landscapes generated with polygons before now, but this one is a little different: it's created using Fractal Geometry.

Hunter is all about one-man operations to penetrate enemy territory and destroy targets or assassinate military personnel. Starting out from your own side's HQ, you are given your mission orders and away you go...

There are three types of game available. Newcomers are should start with a single, involved mission, building up to shorter missions to destroy individual targets, and eventually lengthy missions in which all targets must be destroyed.

To begin with you are armed with little more than a rifle, but there are other supplies to be found along the way. There are also a number of ways of getting from A to B. Although foot power or swimming will get you around slowly, you will find all sorts of vehicles from push-bikes to power boats, vans, tanks, and even helicopters. All of these can be requisitioned – provided you have enough fuel with you.

A different map is generated each time you play and then transformed by the program into a series of connected polygons. The buildings, vehicles, objects, and people are then mapped onto this with a further series of polygons.

Paul Holmes is certainly no stranger to 3D programming. He had been working on a 3D game for CRL before the company experienced problems and the project had to be shelved. He then went on to work with Digital Magic Software, before turning his attention to Hunter.

The 3D routines that Paul wrote for CRL had to be quite substantially rewritten for Hunter. He had originally made use of the Amiga's Blitter* chip for drawing the polygons. Since Hunter was destined to appear on the ST as well (the standard ST does not have a Blitter chip), additional ▶

TECHNOPORN
Total Number Of Objects: 182
Most Complex Object : The General (52 Polygons)
Least Complex Object: Missile (Six Polygons)
Maximum Frame Rate: 25 Frames Per Second
Minimum Frame Rate: Six Frames Per Second
Average Frame Rate: 12 Frames Per Second
Size Of Object Data: 60K (Occupying 65K Block)
Size Of Program Code: 64K
Size Of Landscape: 128 x 128 Grid Points (Three Maps)

PROJECT
Hunter

PUBLISHER
Activision

AUTHOR
Paul Holmes (Design & Programming)
Jason Kingsley (Bitmapped Graphics)
Martin Walker (Sound Effects)

INITIATED
February 1990

RELEASE

AMIGA
February 1991

ATARI ST
February 1991

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
N/A

THERE ARE PLENTY of buildings dotted about in Hunter. Most of them can be entered and many contain objects that will be of use to you.

THE CONTROL PANEL at the bottom of the screen extends to show all the objects you are carrying. Here, at the start of a game, our hero has very little with him but supplies will soon accumulate. A little experimentation soon identifies the function of each object.



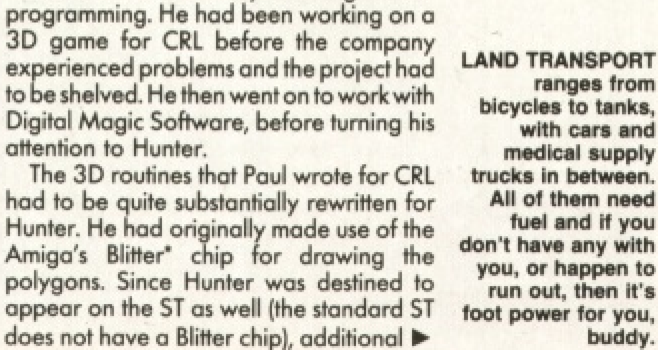
THE MOST USEFUL mode of transport is the helicopter. It takes a little getting used to, but once you have learned to fly it you can easily pop from island to island. Watch out for those enemy missiles though...

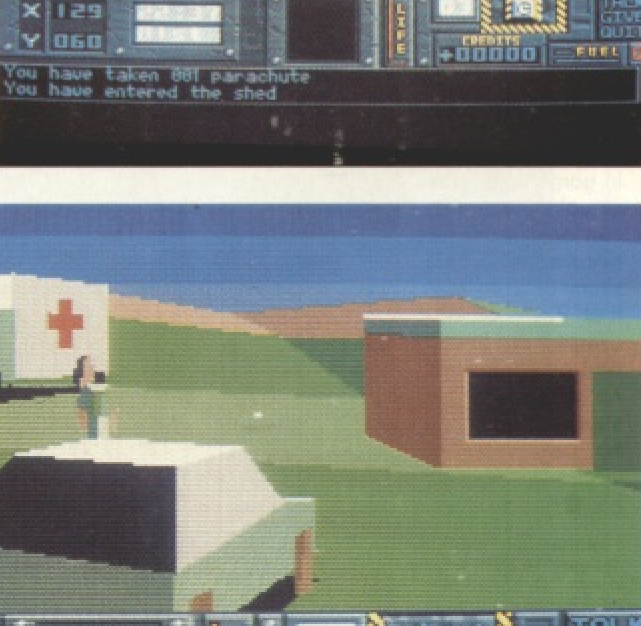


BOATS ARE ESSENTIAL for skipping from one island to another (it's a long way to swim). If you have the map it can be overlaid on the display to aid navigation between land masses.



ONE OF THE MORE useful objects you come across is the Aerial Observation Unit. When fired into the air this reports the location of enemy units, buildings, and vehicles.





LAND TRANSPORT ranges from bicycles to tanks, with cars and medical supply trucks in between. All of them need fuel and if you don't have any with you, or happen to run out, then it's foot power for you, buddy.

WRITTEN AND DESIGNED BY PAUL HOLMES
GRAPHICS BY JASON KINGSLEY
HUNTER
ACTIVISION

software had to be created to mimic the function that the Blitter chip normally performs. Ironically these routines ended up doing the job faster than the Amiga's specialised hardware. "The trouble with using the hardware," says Paul, "is that it imposes certain limitations that then have to be overcome with clever software routines."

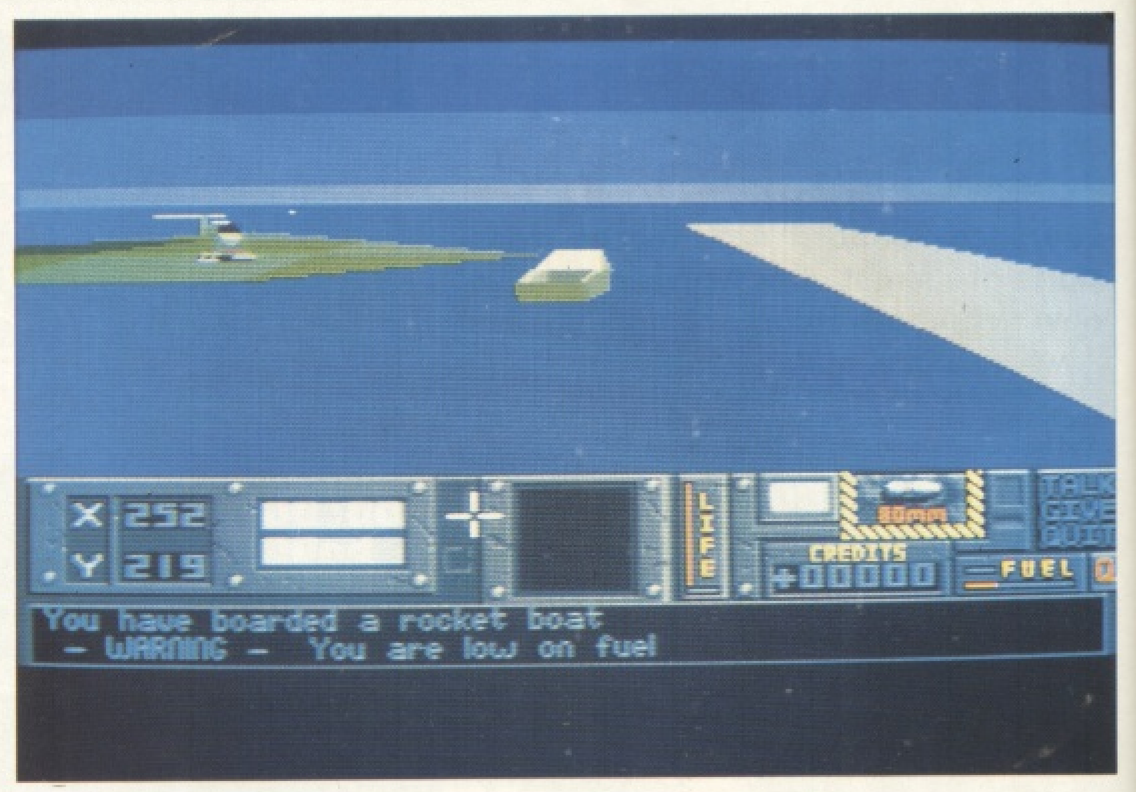
The 3D effects that Paul's routines produce are very impressive indeed. The screens are drawn very quickly considering their complexity, without any nasty glitches during updates. There are some very nice touches, like the way the viewpoint zooms in and out depending on your mode of transport. According to Paul this sort of effect is quite easy to achieve once the basic routines are up and running.

The Object Editor used to design all the 3D objects in Hunter took about a week to write. Then came the torturous process of entering all the data. Unexpectedly, Paul found the hardest thing to write was not the 3D routines but the actual game logic. Each of the enemy soldiers and installations has to know how to react to you in certain conditions. Their response to you when you are occupying a tank will be different to their response if you are on foot.

The 3D routines used in Hunter are easily adaptable to other games. Paul wants to stick with 3D for his next project, but hopes to do something very different to Hunter. One idea he has is to do something that involves flying that is not a simulator.

As far as improving 3D in general is concerned, Paul believes that the major improvement left to make is in gameplay – the actual mechanics can only really be tweaked now. That seems to be an issue that Paul has addressed in Hunter, and gameplay will no doubt be an important factor in his next creation, whatever that may be. ●

* Blitter: a device designed to shift large chunks of data very quickly from one area of the machine's memory to another. In the Amiga's case the Blitter is primarily used for fast transfers of data into the screen RAM.

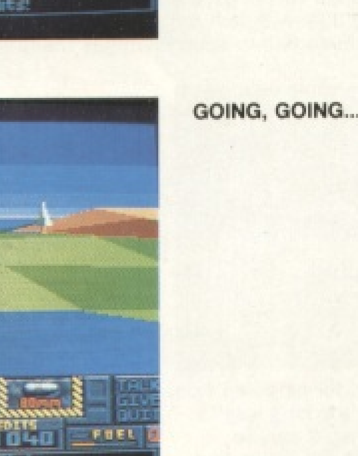


HERE'S A NICE TOUCH. A white line marks the edge of the world on the map. Get to the edge in a boat and sure enough, there it is!

TANKS ARE THE MOST destructive vehicles available and are very useful for doing away with targets. In this instance a power plant is about to get a shelling...



WHOOPS! LOOKS LIKE you got out the wrong side of the boat. It's quite fortunate that this particular agent is a very strong swimmer. But he's got to be some kind of great swimmer if he's to avoid the sharks all by himself.





GOING, GOING...



GONE!

FRACTAL FACTS

FRACTALS were discovered by the eminent French mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot. He identified the universal tendency in all forms of inanimate matter for patterns to be replicated on an infinite number of scales. The pattern on a snowflake for instance, is made up of lots of smaller identical patterns, which in turn are made up of even smaller copies, and so on. This phenomenon also manifests itself in mountains, trees, and coastlines. "Big fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em, and little fleas have smaller fleas and so, ad infinitum."

One thing computers are very good at is the horrendous number crunching required to produce Fractal Patterns, so it is no surprise that Fractal Generating programs have emerged for every machine with the graphical capability to reproduce them. And Hunter is certainly not the first game to make use of Fractal Geometry. Lucasfilm Games made an early, if uninspired attempt to implement Fractals with their action game **Rescue On Fractalus**, and more recently Maelstrom has put Mandelbrot's theories to good use in the well-received **Midwinter** and its sequel (see page 167). But there is still a long way to go before Fractal Geometry can really be exploited to the full, and we will probably have to wait for the next generation of hardware before that happens.

SOMEONE HAS STOLEN MY ᗡNIMIND

SCHWARZENEGGER

STARS IN THE MOVIE.
NOW YOU STAR IN THE GAME...

TOTAL RECALL

AS DOUG QUAID YOU HAVE BEEN HAUNTED BY RECURRING DREAMS OF ANOTHER LIFE ON MARS. YOU ARE DRAWN TO REKALL INCORPORATED, A UNIQUE TRAVEL SERVICE SPECIALIZING IN IMPLANTING FANTASIES INTO THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO DESIRE TO TURN THEIR DREAMS INTO REALITY.

THE EGO TRIP OF A LIFETIME

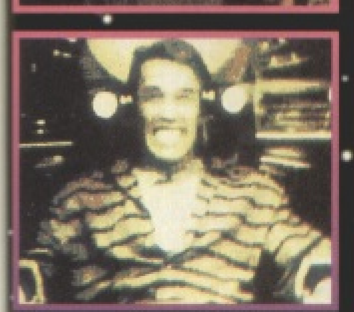
EXPERIENCE THE HORROR AS YOUR DREAMS TURN INTO HIDEOUS NIGHTMARES. SUDDENLY YOU'RE EVERY MOVE IS MONITORED BY WOULD-BE ASSASINS, YOU DISCOVER THE SURREAL TRUTH -

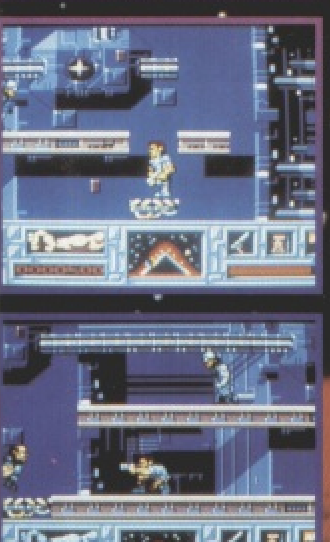
YOU'RE NOT YOU - YOU'RE ME

YOU MUST TRAVEL TO MARS TO DISCOVER YOUR TRUE IDENTITY - YOUR MISSION IS NOW A JOURNEY OF NON-STOP ACTION, STRANGE MUTANTS, FUTURISTIC VEHICLES AND A STARTLING ARRAY OF WEAPONRY ALL CAPTURED IN SUPERBLY EXECUTED GRAPHICS AND A GAME PLAY THAT COMPLIMENTS THE SUCCESS OF THE

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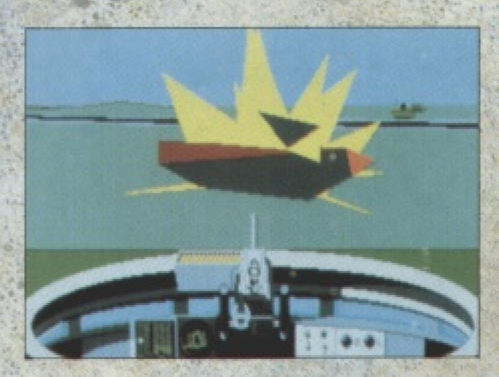

Stein
MICROPROSE
SIMULATION • SOFTWARE

Four M1 Abrams Tanks. Four soldiers in each. That's Four Tanks, Sixteen Men. And you control the whole shooting match.

M1 TANK PLATOON



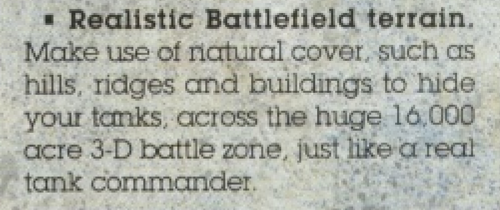
▪ **Strategic and tactical command.** Plan your winning strategies, giving orders to your platoon of tanks, calling in airstrikes and artillery. At any moment you can 'jump' into the thick of the action, taking over direct control, as commander, gunner or driver of any tank.



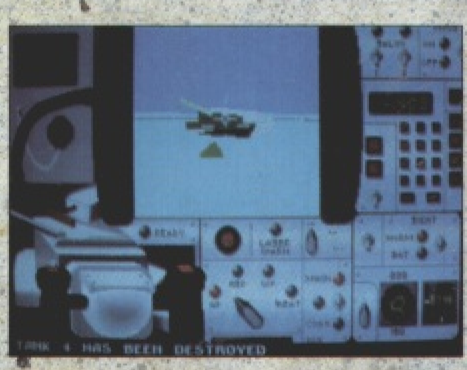
▪ **Leadership.** Each of the 16 men in your tank platoon has his own battlefield skills and abilities. Improving with experience, promotion and decorations, your chances of success increase as your platoon become battle hardened.

▪ **Realistic Battlefield terrain.** Make use of natural cover, such as hills, ridges and buildings to hide your tanks, across the huge 16,000 acre 3-D battle zone, just like a real tank commander.

▪ **Endless variety.** Fight during the day, at night, in snow, mud, rain or clear weather. With thousands of battlefields and millions of situations and you get endless enjoyment. Decide between single battles or an entire campaign.



▪ **High-tech war.** Laser rangefinders, depleted uranium penetrators, wire-guided missiles, reactive armour, air support and artillery make M1 Tank Platoon the most comprehensive, up-to-date simulation of armoured land warfare available for your home computer.



IBM SCREEN SHOTS SHOWN. ACTUAL SHOTS MAY VARY

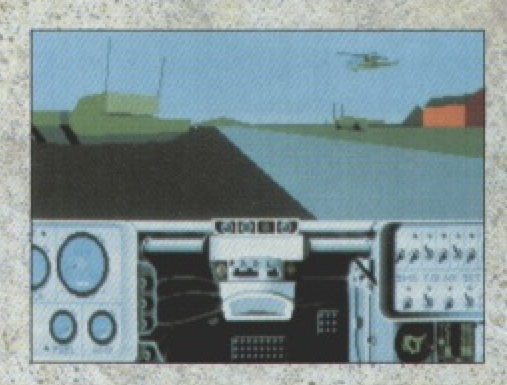
M1 Tank Platoon was released for IBM PC compatible machines in October 1989;

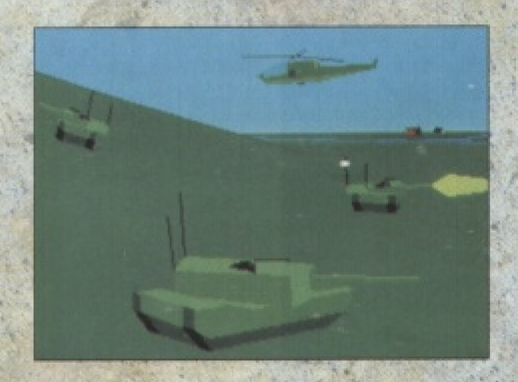
"MicroProse has surely excelled on this one: it's all there, from superb playability through great attention to detail to one of the best manuals I've seen in a long time. The competition should watch out, as this one's going to take some beating." *** PC Leisure Spring '90**

" I can't really fault M1 Tank Platoon as it's definitely MicroProse's most comprehensive simulation yet." 87% C&VG Nov '89

"The most frighteningly accurate tank sim we've seen." 926 Ace Dec '89








IT'S WACKY
IT'S CATCHY.....
.....IT'S MORE THAN
UP TO SCRATCHY.
9 LIVES
Bob Cat has a girl in every town, but there is one who is special to his heart; Claudette Cat. Claudette has the biggest eyes you've ever seen and Bob aims to make her his Queen. Off Bob goes to sing his night song, but arrives just in time to see his beloved being whisked away in a net by two of the Mad Scientist's men. What horrendous experiments will the scientists carry out on old cutie paws? Can Bob save her in time?
Screen shots from Atari ST format.
Discover new wonders of animation around every corner and new levels of endurance in your joystick hand.
The platform game is back and how! 9 Lives contains some of the greatest animation ever seen in any computer game, its playability is amazing the desire to rescue the curvaceous Claudette Cat will keep you mapping for hours on end.

PROJECT
Predator 2

PUBLISHER
Image Works

AUTHOR
Arc Developments
Paul Walker
(Design & Graphics)
Jon Harrison
(Graphics)
Julian Scott
(Amiga & Atari ST Programming)
Oxford Moebius
(PC Programming)

INITIATED
July 1990

RELEASE

AMIGA
Spring 1991

ATARI ST
Spring 1991

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
Spring 1991



THE PREDATOR 2 title screen came from this original film still. Arc simply digitised the transparency and reformatted it in monochrome form before dropping the Predator 2 logo on top.

Predator 2

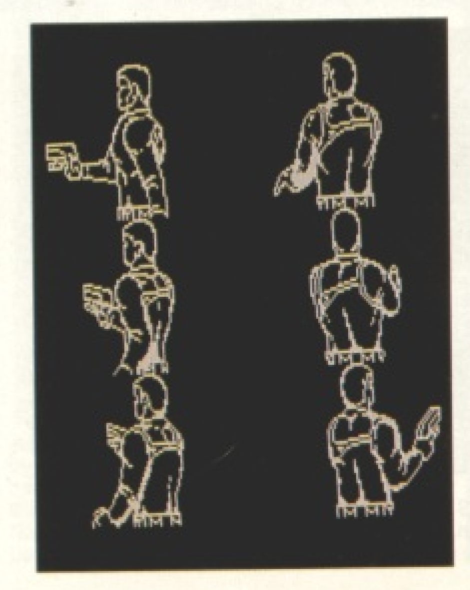
The Predator is back! Only this time he's picked the wrong man to hunt... Fortunately, it looks as though ImageWorks has picked the right team to produce the game of the forthcoming film. Phil South took a trip to Arc Developments.

YOU CAN SAY what you like about Walsall, but the place is never short of programming activity. The credit goes to Arc Developments for that, as the team's got so much on its plate at the moment that there's little room for dessert. Apart from three unnamed "biggies" for next Christmas, one for Ocean, one for US Gold and one for Activision, the team's working on a few smaller projects "for other people".

And, of course, there's **Predator 2**...

"We were doing another project for Mirrorsoft," says Paul Walker, "but that was put on the back-burner for a while. So we asked them if there was anything else and we ended up with Predator 2."

The design and building of the project has been mainly down to Paul Walker and Arc newcomer Julian Scott, who's responsible for the programming. However, with so many other projects on the boil Paul's time is spread thin, which meant that some help was needed. Enter Jon Harrison.



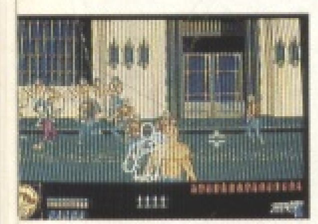
THE TRANSPARENT figure of Harrigan as he appears in the arcade action... although this is subject to change if Danny Glover, who plays Harrigan in the movie, doesn't like it.

"We needed another graphics artist," Paul explains. "We'd been advertising anyway, and there hadn't been many people that had applied. Then Jon phoned up one day and said 'Gis a job'. We'd seen his stuff before. He's an old boy of the graphics world... he's worked for Elite and Gremlin Graphics... Jon came along, showed us some new stuff, and that was it. He came on the Wednesday and started on the Thursday. So, we're basically splitting the graphics between myself and Jon, and now we've got about a month left to do. It's due to be finished on the first of December."

That's... three, four... five months. That seems like a short contract...

"In Arc terms it's a shortish one," Paul confirms. "We've done conversions in three months. It depends how much of the actual game you've got to build from scratch. I mean, **Dragon Breed** took nearly eight months. Now we're just finishing off the Amiga version. This one, if it's on time, will be a short contract."

Paul's original design featured four 'normal'-sized levels, but now he's made Level One twice as long as the ▶



others (Image Works asked for five levels to ensure value for money, so Paul compromised and made the first level double the size).

"The first three levels are basically all the same," he reveals. "In these first few levels the Predator takes a background role, as he does in the film. He stalks Harrigan. And Harrigan is fighting the Jamaicans and Colombians in this big drug war. That's what the first three levels are, working your way through the three main battles of the film, killing as many drug dealers as you can, with the Predator in the background in his hidden mode. If you shoot him, he gets annoyed, and he throws some weapons at you. You won't know what and you won't know when. But he's got a disc he can spin at you, a spear, a big spiky net that pins you to the wall, and, of course, his laser.

"There are a lot of nice added features in the first three levels as well. In the film there's people in the background – citizens. So what we've tried to do, on the corresponding level, is to put those people in. Like there's a reporter that keeps coming round trying to interview Harrigan. And he keeps turning up in the most unlikely of places.

"In the film there's this FBI agent and Harrigan in this pitch black office, all the lights turned off, and it's all dead top secret. Then all of a sudden the lights switch on, and it's this guy doing the interview: 'Hello, Mr Harrigan, can you tell me...' and all that. So he appears in front of Harrigan in the game, trying to do interviews. And you can't shoot through him.

"There's also a Japanese camera crew that's trying to interview the Colombians and Jamaicans. So you'll be sat there shooting at the drug barons, and these people'll pop up with sound booms, cameras and stuff. If you shoot them your badge goes down, because you're not supposed to shoot citizens. That can never be replenished at all. If it gets down to zero, you're kicked off the force, and that's one way of the game ending.

"And if your energy gets down to zero, you're dead. Well, you're not DEAD... If your Harrigan character gets killed, all you see is an ambulance. So he's not actually dead, but he's not very well.

"One thing 20th Century Fox won't allow us to do is have killing in there, which is a bit impossible. The film's all blood everywhere, but they say 'It's a kiddies game, we don't want killing in there'. So we've tried to think of a way round it... and we haven't been able to find a way round it! We were basically given the style of the game, **Operation Wolf** style, and that's what we've done. What we've come up with so far is they fall over backwards and disappear."

"20th Century Fox has to approve all graphics. And the actors' agents have to approve all graphics, at least the likenesses of those people. We got a fax through, and there's a list of people who don't care, and a list of people who DO care. The ones that DO care are going to have a look at the game. Like Danny Glover who plays Harrigan, he wants a look. The version here has been sent to America for approval, and we'd better hope that they like it. If they don't... we'll just try again." ●

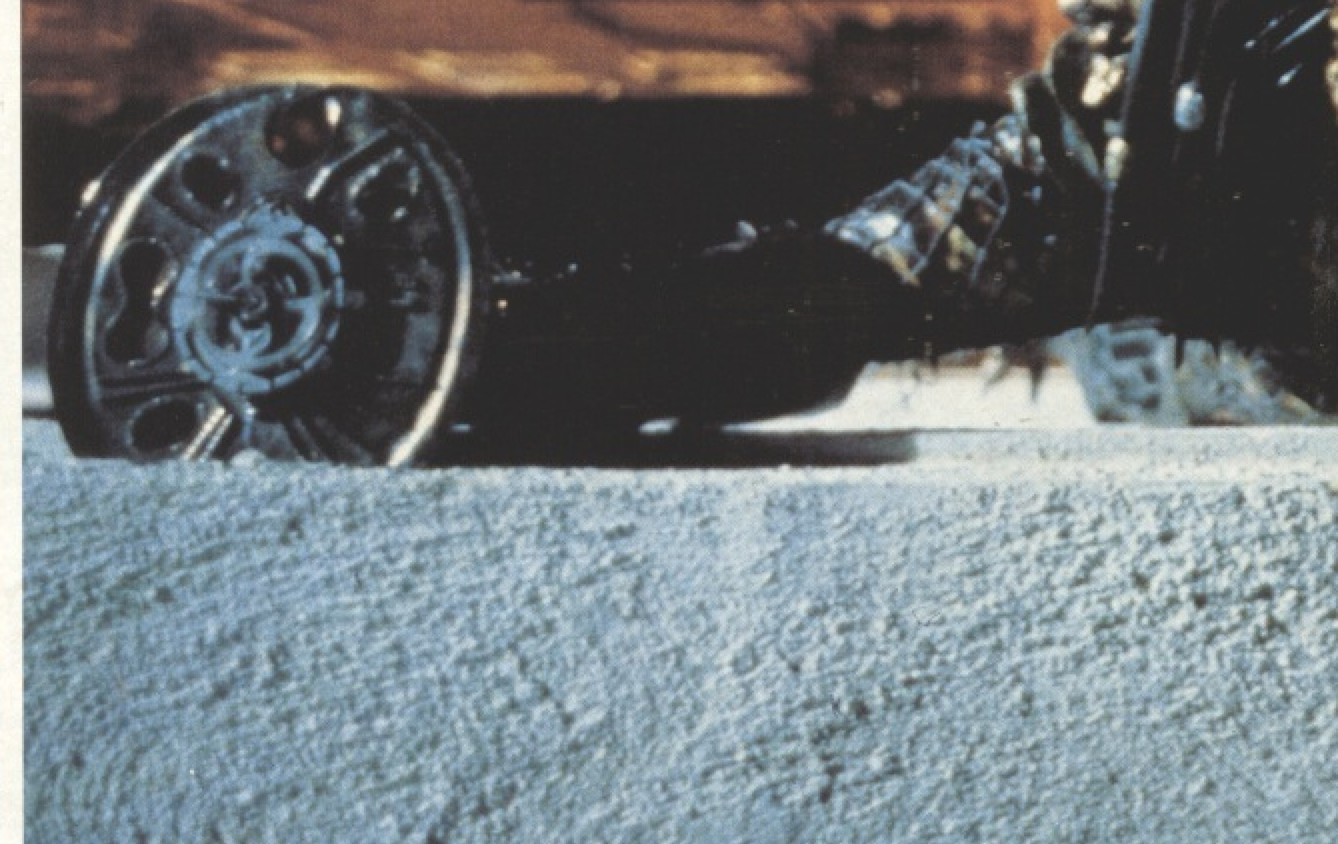
PREDATORY PIXELS

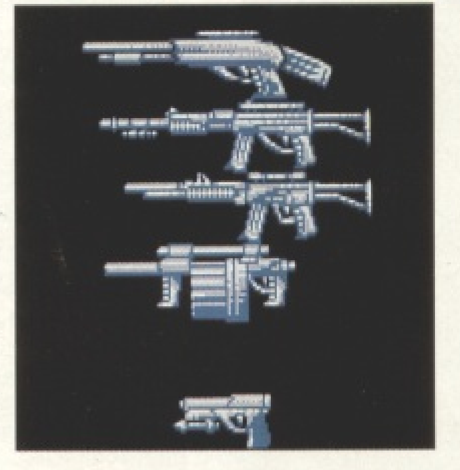
PAUL WALKER usually produces his graphics on an Amiga A500. This time however, the Amiga is gone, to be replaced by a Compaq 386 Despro PC with VGA card, two Mb of memory, running the MS DOS version of **DPaint II Enhanced**. Why the change, Paul?

"It's more flexible. Apart from everything else about it, it a lot faster at doing things. Everybody else is working on PCs here, and rather than have to keep **DO2DOS**ing each lot of pictures, I can just save it down to disk and give it to 'em straight off. Plus there's a lot more features on DPaint II Enhanced, but the main idea is pure flexibility."

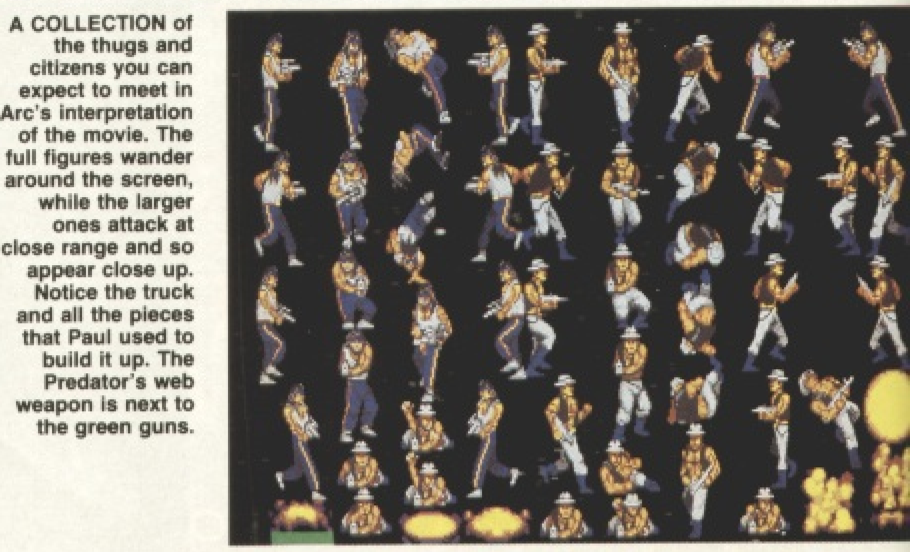
Also, using the utilities built into the PC version of DPaint you can convert files from one format to another without too much trouble. Then the code from the disks that Paul creates on his PC is simply pasted into the source code and fed via serial links to the target machines.

"The other beauty of this system is I can have a number of DPaints running at a time, under this multi-tasking **Windows 3** system. If I'm doing four different projects at the same time, and the Spectrum programmer for Predator comes over and says 'Oh, can you quickly just do THIS for me', I can just click on an icon and it opens the Speccy graphics."



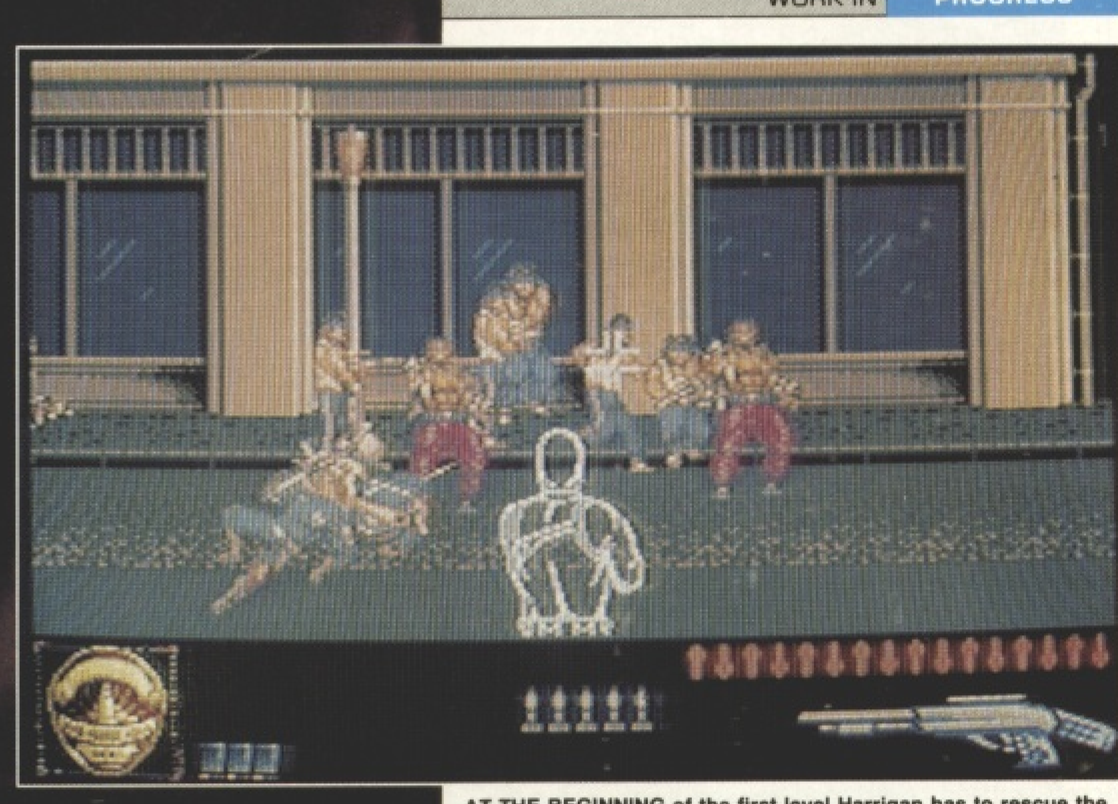


THE FOUR WEAPONS Harrigan has at his disposal. His Magnum, which he always has to fall back on, is seen at the bottom.



A COLLECTION of the thugs and citizens you can expect to meet in Arc's interpretation of the movie. The full figures wander around the screen, while the larger ones attack at close range and so appear close up. Notice the truck and all the pieces that Paul used to build it up. The Predator's web weapon is next to the green guns.

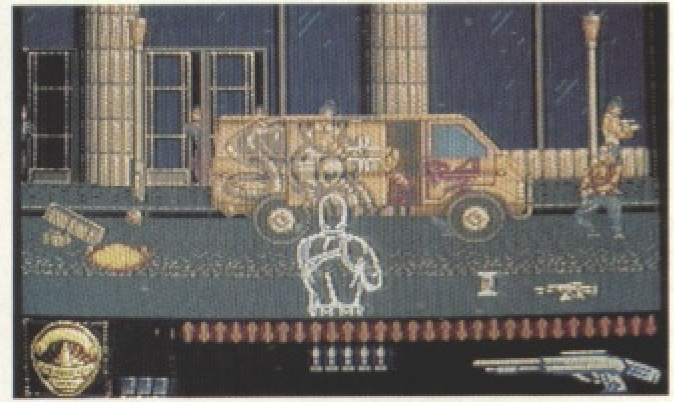




AT THE BEGINNING of the first level Harrigan has to rescue the motorcycle cops. Mind you,it looks as though their chips have well and trully been had...

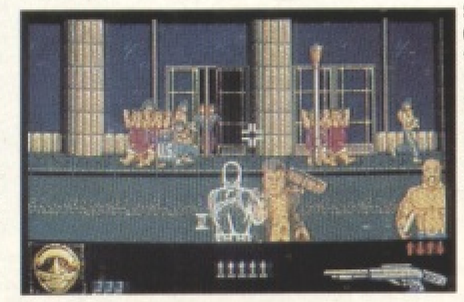


IT ALL COMES DOWN to this. In the final scenes of the movie Harrigan comes face to face with the Predator in its slaughterhouse hideout.



IN THE FIRST LEVEL, a van pulls up in front of Harrigan. Its door slides open to reveal a bunch of gun-toting hoodlums. Although Harrigan's got a few rockets to hand, he hasn't got the launcher. This could mean death... erm, well, a bit of pain anyway.

AAH, HOW SWEET... The Predator (played by the giant Kevin Peter Hall, whose height secured him the original role) and the sinister FBI agent Keyes (played by Gary Busey) share a tender moment between takes.



SHOOT THE BAD GUYS in the foreground, but watch out for the fat lady behind. If you kill her, your badge diminishes, and there's no way to get it back.

GAMEPLAY

THE FOUR SECTIONS in Arc's 'conversion' cover the following areas...

Level One is a big battle in the streets with Harrigan versus the Colombians. Two bike cops get pinned down by gunfire after pulling over a van full of gunmen, and Harrigan comes in to the rescue.

Level Two is set in a penthouse apartment. Paul had some problems with this scene as the script and the slides from the film set didn't look much like the same building. In the end he settled for the look in the slides.

Level Three is set in the Subway and plays pretty much the same as the first two levels, only the citizens are different. The last level is a complete departure. In the first three levels you have four weapons. If the ammunition for any of these weapons runs out, you throw the weapon down and use your Magnum ,which has an endless supply of bullets. This gives you 'breathing space' to pick up extra ammunition to support the weapon you just threw away. "Each weapon has its own fire rate," Paul explains. "One of them's a rocket launcher, and there's only a set number of rockets you can collect, and you use them right in the middle 'cause there's a whole load of guys that come on. If you haven't got your rockets, and you haven't got your rocket launcher... you're stuffed, basically.

"The slaughterhouse is basically a one-on-one with you and the Predator. Since Dutch went missing in the first movie, this FBI agent has set up a little team that's been studying the Predator's moves. They've found out that all these killings that've been happening are down to the Predator. They set up a trap for him when they find out he's using the slaughterhouse as his base. Because he's hidden and they can't see him, they work out that he can see them through heat. So they wear specially insulated suits, they don't give off any heat. Then they light up the whole warehouse with ultraviolet, and sprinkle it with radioactive particles which will adhere to the Predator. They've got UV lights on them, so they can now see the Predator. So the Predator goes in there and there's a small team of FBI agents looking for him with liquid nitrogen guns. Now then, the Predator starts hearing things with his high-pitched hearing, and he looks over the ledge and he can't see anything! So he changes the viewer on his helmet, clicking through various wavelengths until he gets to ultraviolet. Now he can see them. So he jumps down and starts killing all these guys. At that point Harrigan bursts in. So Level Four is just you and the Predator. You've got so many hits, and he's got so many hits."

There's also the hazard of the remaining FBI agents running around, which means they effectively act as the 'citizens' from the first three levels. Also, the Predator is going to be in his invisible mode, so he's going to hard (but, as we all know, not impossible) to see. But there are some ways you can even the score.

"If you shoot the fire alarms on the wall, it starts the sprinkler system and water starts raining down. The Predator crackles and comes out of hidden mode, and you can see him. Once the red box goes off the side of the screen, he flickers back and he's invisible again. And just as a little special effect, if you happen to shoot one of these nitrogen guns when it's sprinkling, it'll snow instead!"



AN UNFORTUNATE victim of the Predator is found hanging upside down, without his skin. The Predator keeps the skin of his victims and, in certain cases, the brain and spinal cord as trophies. He's not a very nice guy.



IF YOU EVER wondered how the Predator's light-bending camouflage effect is achieved, here's the answer. In the scenes where the Predator is hidden, the actor is kitted out in a bright-red suit. When the special effects guys get the film, the red is replaced by the shimmering light in a similar way to the blue-screen technique that allows Superman to fly.



NOW HERE'S an interesting sight... In the Predator's trophy 'cabinet' we catch a quick glimpse of this alien skull. Could this be a reference to the much rumoured Predator Vs Alien **movie?**

PREDATOR 2: THE HUNT CONTINUES

NOVEMBER 1997: It's been 10 years since Major Dutch Schaeffer and his team's 'close encounter' with the Predator in the South American jungle.

Now, due to the effects of global warming, Los Angeles is in the midst of its hottest ever heatwave. Downtown temperatures are soaring to 109 degrees – but it's not the only heat in this city.

A drug war is raging, with the two biggest gangs – Colombians (known as El Scorpios) and Jamaicans – fighting for control of the illicit trade, and battling against the police who want both gangs out of the picture.

This combination of intense heat and conflict has attracted the attention of a new, even tougher Predator. Lurking in the shadows, he now wants a piece of the action...

Danny Glover (**Lethal Weapon**) plays tough LA cop Detective Lieutenant Mike Harrigan, the man with the task of cleaning up the drug wars. But when people from both Colombian and Jamaican factions are found skinned and hanging by their feet, the case takes an unexpected turn.



THE PREDATOR isn't the sort of guy you'd like to meet down a dark alley. So here he is – down a dark alley. You wouldn't guess it from this shot, but ol' Pred's armed with a telescopic spear, a set of nasty, near-weightless darts, a shoulder-mounted laser cannon, retractable wrist-knives and a deadly frisbee-style Smart Weapon that cuts through anything.

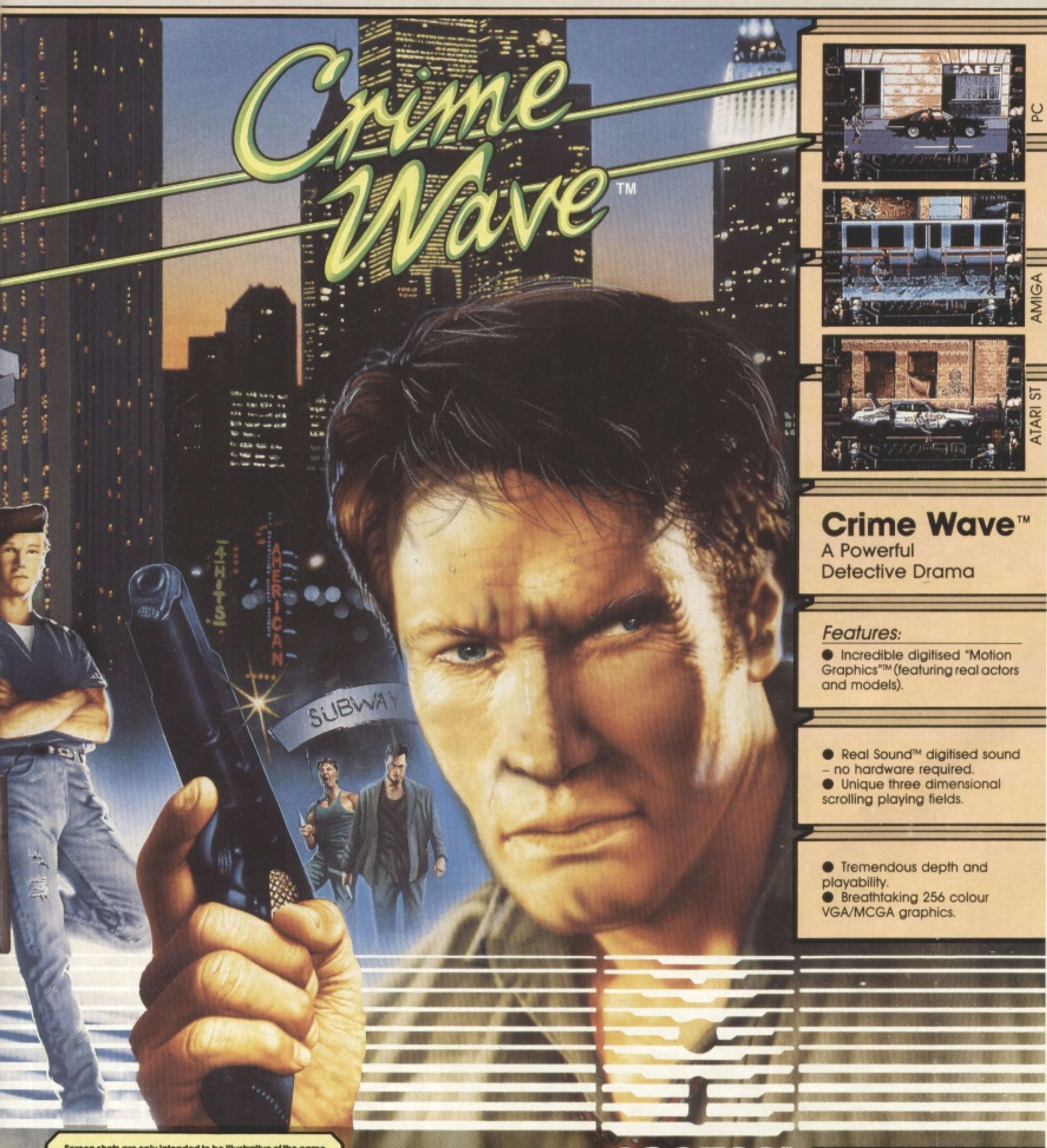
No explanation can be found for the bizarre murders. The situation is aggravated further by the arrival of shady FBI agentPeter Keyes (Gary Busey) who promptly throws Harrigan off the case and takes over. None too pleased, Harrigan sends his young partner Danny Archuleta to investigate. Late that night, Danny sneaks into the latest murder scene to look for evidence that the Feds might have missed. But when he gets there he finds more than he bargained for... and is promptly relieved of his brain and spinal cord.

Outraged by the death of his partner, Harrigan gets personal about the case and decides to go it alone – despite Keyes' threats. Events come to a head when the Predator massacres the occupants of a subway train and Harrigan finally closes in on his target. As you'd expect, the climax is an apocalyptic one-on-one battle between Harrigan and the Predator...

Co-writers Jim and John Thomas, who created Predator and scripted the first movie, also penned this sequel. As far as the rest of the crew is concerned however, it's all change. There's no sign of Schwarzenegger, although Glover reputedly underwent a strenuous physical training routine to build up his biceps for a more Arnie-like performance. But perhaps even more important is the absence of Predator director John McTiernan (**Die Hard, The Hunt For Red October**).

It's a very rare occurrence that the original director returns to make the sequel, so Predator 2 is directed by the little-known Stephen Hopkins, whose only notable previous credit is **A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 5: The Dream Child**. We have to wait until Spring of next year to find out how well he's fared...


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THE ULTIMATE DRIVING COMPILATION
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Your Ferrari F40's hot and raring to go. Battle bumper to bumper in a thrilling 16 stage race across the States with each new terrain a different challenge.
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"Absolutely incredible. The best driving game ever. Superb" Sinclair User
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DEUTEROS

After a thousand year wait one of the most successful space 'adventures' is back. Gary Whitta got chirping with Ian Bird.

THIS SPACESHIP'S about to blast off 'into' the screen, boldly going where no man has gone before, in a slice of Deuteros' elaborate, and impressive, opening sequence. It's a shame you can't hear the excellent dramatic music that accompanies it.

PROJECT
Deuteros

PUBLISHER
Electric Dreams

AUTHOR
Ian Bird (Concept, Design, Program, Sound)
Jai Redman (Graphics)
Matt Bates (Music)

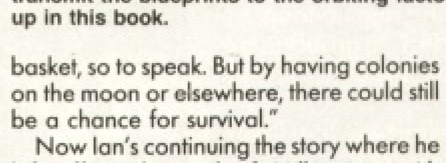
INITIATED
July 1989

RELEASE

AMIGA
March 1991

ATARI ST
March 1991

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
TBA



BEFORE A PIECE of equipment can be built here at the Production Centre, you have to know how to build it. That's the job of the Research People who, having designed an object, transmit the blueprints to the orbiting factory, where they end up in this book.

A SPACESHIP lies dormant in one of your Shuttle Bays and ready to fly. Traffic control is an important factor in Deuteros. With so many of your ships zipping about, you have to organise your facilities so that there's always a bay for them to land in when they arrive at their destination.

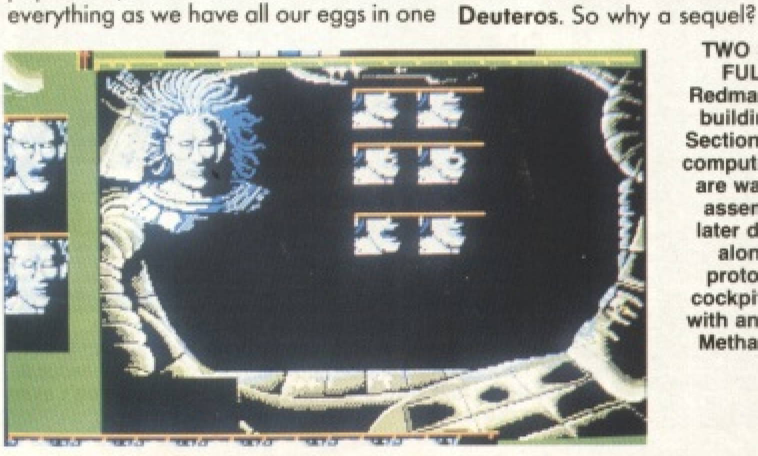
IN THE YEAR 2200, a huge asteroid crashes into the planet Earth, wiping out the population and rendering the globe an uninhabitable lump of volcanic rock. Only a small team of research scientists based on the moon survive. The task they set themselves of recolonising Earth is made no easier by the intervention by a warmongering race of Martians, who see their chance to conquer the humans once and for all...

That was the story behind **Millennium 2.2**, one of the surprise strategy successes of 1989. Its creator, prolific strategy software author Ian Bird, reveals that the idea for Millennium stemmed more from his interest in astronomy and the conquest of space than his desire to write a strategy game where no historical research was required. "The moral of the story is that, if a disaster ever happened that wiped out the Earth's population, it would be the end of everything as we have all our eggs in one basket, so to speak. But by having colonies on the moon or elsewhere, there could still be a chance for survival."

Now Ian's continuing the story where he left off at the end of Millennium with **Deuteros**. So why a sequel?

"Erm... basically because I had so many ideas left after Millennium 2.2 which I couldn't put in for one reason or another," Ian explains. "Millennium didn't really turn out the way I wanted it. It's also because Millennium was very popular, and everybody kept asking 'When are you going to do a sequel?'"

At the outset of Deuteros, everything looks bright and rosy. You successfully recolonised Earth and fought off the meddling Martians who had their bug-eyes on the planet – but as the story unfolds it becomes apparent that your problems are far from over. "Deuteros' story is set one thousand years after Millennium," says Ian. "Earth has been recolonised, but the Methanoids – one of the mutant races that you were responsible for ▶



TWO SCREENS FULL of Jai Redman's graphic building blocks. Sections of a huge computerised brain are waiting to be assembled at a later date (right), along with a prototype ship cockpit, complete with an unfinished Methanoid (left).





WHAT THIS shot of Deuteros' title screen can't convey is the many neat animated touches. The whole logo lies dormant, until a letter bursts into life and 'performs'. Because it's at random, you could sit and watch this display for hours without seeing a particular piece of animation.



DEUTEROS' BATTLE COMPUTER, where fights are won and lost. The green dots are 'good'. Red dots are 'bad'.

creating in Millenium – have gone and taken over virtually everything else in the meantime."

In Deuteros, the objective isn't quite as clear-cut as it may at first seem. "At the start it seems that the idea of the game is to take out the Methanoids and stop them from getting their hands on planet Earth. But later on, as your empire expands out into the stars, you find out that this isn't the real objective. There's a third party to be found, and they real the actual, more profound objective."

Ian's intention for the sequel to Millennium was to create an 'adventure' similar in style, but incorporating much more involved gameplay. "I mostly wanted to improve the strategy. There were a lot of holes in Millennium, and if you wanted to find fault with it, it wasn't difficult to do. And I wanted to try to keep away from factual information. Deuteros throws most of the laws of physics out of the window!"

And as Ian points out, size does matter: "Most of the feedback we got back from players of Millennium was very positive. Everyone enjoyed playing it," he says. "But one thing that stood out was that people were saying that, while it was a lot of fun while it lasted, it didn't last long enough. It was all over too quickly!" That's a problem Ian is convinced he's eradicated this time around. Deuteros is some 10 times bigger than Millennium in terms of playing area. Whereas in Millennium you were limited by the bounds of the Solar System, in Deuteros the invention of Interstellar ships mean you can spread your empire throughout the entire Galaxy! The upshot of that is a strategy-based adventure of sorts that promises to take a very long time to complete. Ian estimates that, even with the complete solution, completion could take over 30 hours of continuous play.

The central structure of Deuteros remains fundamentally unchanged however. Your empire is spread across the stars through the use of spaceships and portable spacestations – but such equipment doesn't come for free. The process of progress is convoluted, with raw materials to be mined, research to be done and equipment to be produced – all at the cost of time, energy and manpower. The art of survival itself is a continual balancing act.

However, technology has progressed somewhat over the last millennium, and the production process is now a lot more refined. While research and mining still take place on the planet surface, the production is carried out in orbiting factories. And it's no longer necessary to have everything controlled manually. Build a smart enough computer, and it can be used for anything from running a production facility to the autopilot a cargo ship to its destination. The production process itself has also been refined, providing greater freedom with the equipment you create. Now custom spaceships can be built by choosing a chassis and slapping parts down around it.

But while technology has progressed, so has the enemy. The Methanoids are much wilier than their Martian counterparts were a thousand years ago. In fact, at the outset, they are not even an 'official' enemy. They are out there somewhere, twiddling their green thumbs, and until things get too hot it's even possible to trade with them. They won't attack until you do something to provoke them – which might be inevitable – and when they do it doesn't take long to escalate into all-out war.

But, unlike before, where battles were fought manually in a series of arcade sections, the warring in Deuteros is an altogether more strategic affair. "There are no arcade sequences this time round – we decided that the arcade sequences in Millennium were superfluous. Now you have fleets of warships, which you control from a central flagship. The actual battles are fought with computerised fighter drones." In such a way, territory is won and lost. As far as the battling is concerned, your prime objective is to defend Earth at all costs. Lose that, and you lose everything.

Having started work on Deuteros last July, it's only now that the end is in sight, with the majority of the programming and design work finished. "I'm still making improvements and enhancements to the gameplay. The truth is, that if Activision asked for a finished version tomorrow, they could have one, but I think it would be a sin to let the game go out before it's completely finished." Playtesting too is more than just a routine exercise. With so many different ways to play Deuteros, every avenue must be thoroughly explored to ensure there are no creepy, nasty pieces of code lurking somewhere in deep space waiting to pounce on an unsuspecting player and bring the proceedings to a crashing halt.

By the way, Deuteros is Greek. It means Second. ●

SOUND

ONCE AGAIN, IAN IS handling all the sonic effects, while musician Matt Bates provides the tunes. "You have to hear them. They're brilliant," says Ian. "Dave Whittaker's original music was a bit naff, but for Deuteros we've got a music score consisting of four tunes, and they're all excellent. The music itself takes up so much memory that Deuteros now comes on two disks!"

BIRD WATCHING

COVENTRY-BASED Ian Bird's career as an entertainment software designer and programmer began many years ago when, as a college student studying engineering, he came into contact with a Commodore PET. "It grabbed me and things snowballed when Sinclair brought out the ZX80 and ZX81."

The 31-year-old's first commercial effort was **Sea Wolf**, a strategic submarine simulation for the ZX81. This was followed by **Warp Factor Six**, a space-bound strategy-based simulation for Spectrum. After joining PSS in the mid-80s, Ian went on to write **The Battle Of Britain** and **Tobruk**, and worked on the classic **Theatre Europe** for the 8-bit formats. Then both he and PSS associate Alan Steel left for Activision – the results were the WWII battle simulation **Guadalcanal** and the more contemporary **High Frontier**, which attracted a lot of attention due to its controversial SDI storyline.

Shortly after came Ian's first 16-bit project, Millennium 2.2, which was originally written for the PC. Now we have Deuteros, but what does the future hold? "I don't know yet. We'll have to wait and see. I've got plenty of ideas, but frankly at the moment all I want to do is take a holiday."

GRAPHICS

THE DISTINCTIVE VISUALS are being handled by young artist Jai Redman, who also did the same for Millennium 2.2. "The thing that we didn't want was a plain metallic feel for the graphics," Ian reveals. "We've tried to make them a combination of biological and metallic. The original intention was actually to have less graphics to make room for more gameplay, but that didn't work out and so now we've got much more of both!"

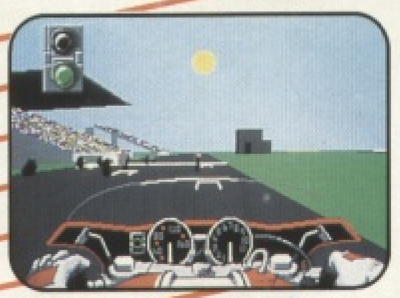


THE VIEW THROUGH the cockpit of IOS Lexington. In Deuteros, how you use a ship depends on how you kit it out. They can haul cargo, mine asteroids, ferry personnel around, and even fight. And with a computer autopilot, you don't even need to fly the thing.

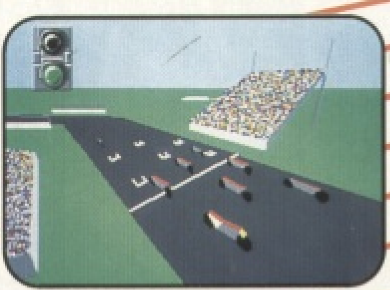
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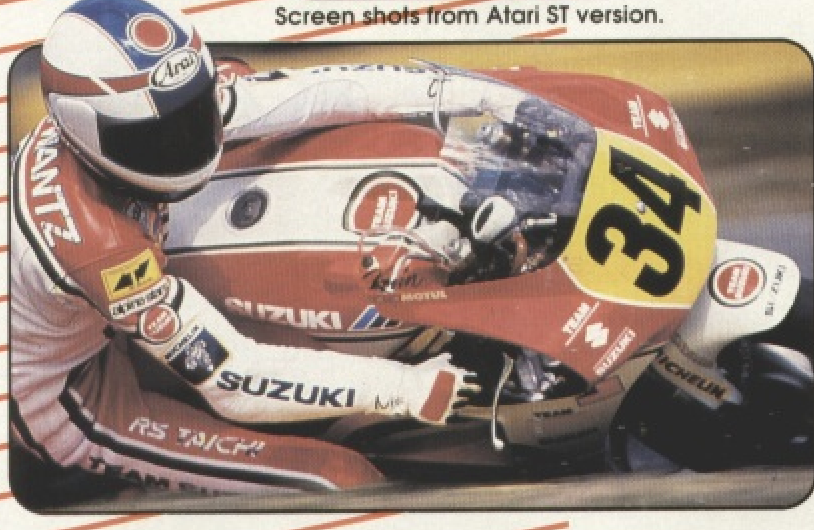


Screen shots from Atari ST version.



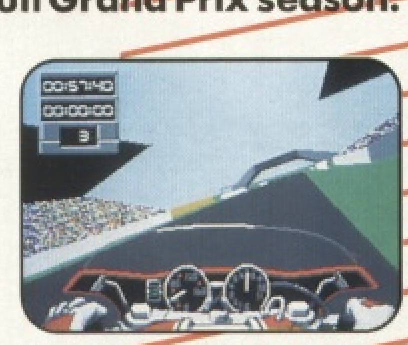






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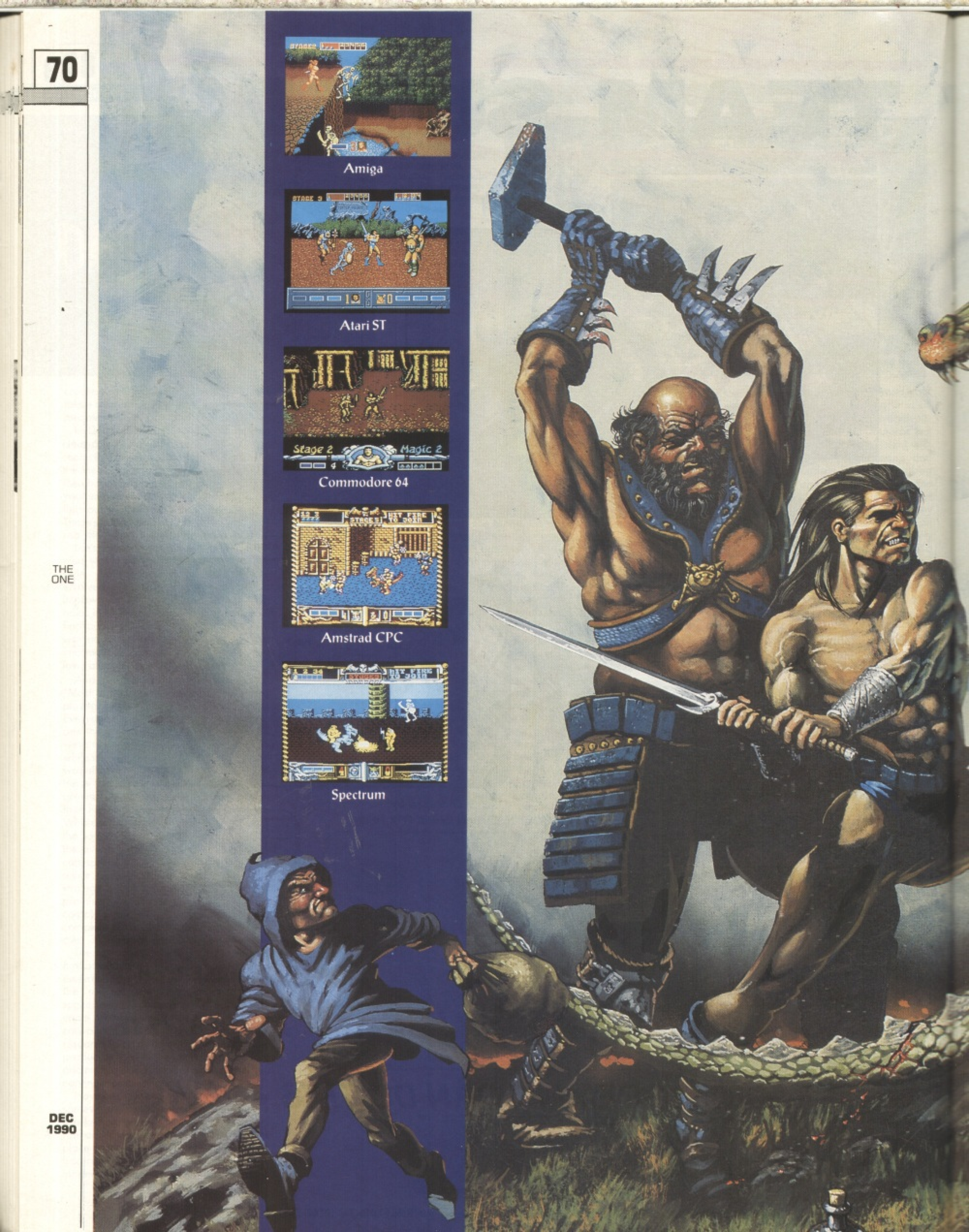


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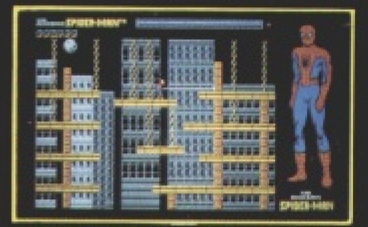
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PROJECT
SWIV

PUBLISHER
Storm

AUTHOR
Random Access
Ronald Pieket Weeserik (Amiga & Atari ST Programming, Sound)
Ned Langman (Graphics)

INITIATED
February 1990

RELEASE
AMIGA
January 1991

ATARI ST
January 1991

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
N/A

With a huge stretch of continuous action, solo or dual play, and more aliens than the Star Wars cantina. Could this be the material of the Shoot 'Em Up Of The Year? Laurence Scotford shoots and tells.

Three Steps Beyond Silkworm

IT'S THE END of the line for the land-bound jeep. Fortunately there's an armed and armoured speed boat standing by ready to take over. What a nice touch.

WHAT COULD *SWIV* stand for one wonders? 'Shoot 'em up With Intense Violence' perhaps? Whatever it means it certainly doesn't begin to describe one of the most playable blasters to appear since the likes of **Silkworm** and **Xenon 2: Megablast**.

Silkworm, which was also a Random Access project, has obviously been a major influence on this one. Once again, the first player occupies a helicopter while the second controls a jeep. But while Silkworm was a horizontal affair, this one is a top-down vertically scrolling number.

While SWIV obviously borrows from its predecessors (how many shoot 'em ups don't?), it is unique in one important respect. The action is non-stop through several terrains without breaks for loading data. This makes for 30 solid minutes of continuous scrolling action.

One contemporary favourite feature you won't find in SWIV is power-ups in the form of add-ons. Instead there's a novel nifty method of boosting your firepower... the Goose (once again 'borrowed' from Silkworm). It's one of the most formidable enemies, appearing in pieces and assembling in a different formation every time. When shot, the Goose releases tokens. These are then shot to cycle through the improved firepower options. There are also some special tokens thrown in for good measure.

The reason for avoiding an array of superfluous add-ons is simple, as Ronald explains: "If you have different types of bolt ons, are they really different or are they just different sprites? **Saint Dragon** is a good example of a game with varied add-ons that actually do different things. In SWIV we did not change the player missile sprite because that looks silly and we are trying to keep it fairly realistic."

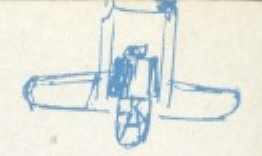
And anyway, if things hot up a little too much there's always the smart bomb-cum-shield. This bubble-like contraption works in a similar way to the same functionary in Silkworm. It floats lazily down the screen, minding its own business until you either collide with it or shoot it, giving you a temporary shield or obliterating everything in sight respectively.

Smart Bombs are few and far between however, so a bit of concentrated fire power is often necessary. The helicopter can only fire up the screen in the direction it is facing, but the jeep can maintain its fire in any direction while moving where it will. That's very handy for picking off enemies to the side and coming in from the rear.

YOIKS! THINGS CAN get a little hectic at times. The program continually monitors the number of adversaries on screen. Shoot them too quickly and you only have to face another barrage.

BECAUSE SWIV never stops to load data the transition between some of the zones is cleverly masked by stones. The stones are created by overlaying sprite data onto the background data.

SWIV UNASHAMEDLY plays tribute to other great games of this genre. The Silkworm influence is obvious, but in this section Atari Games' 1981 arcade hit Xevious gets a similar treatment.

THE BIG-SHOT

SWIV BEGAN LIFE when The Sales Curve's MD, Jane Cavanagh, asked Random Access what more could be done with Silkworm. Ronald had plenty of ideas that he wanted to implement in a new shoot 'em up (he's been in love with the genre ever since **Xevious** appeared). So they decided to create a Silkworm-inspired blaster, perhaps not realising just how far beyond Silkworm the finished product was destined to go.

The main difference between the two is magnitude. In SWIV there's more variety and more action, although the basic concept stays the same. "The only thing you can hope for in a new shoot 'em up," says Ronald, "is to make the product more playable than the previous one."

As in Silkworm you can play with two completely different vehicles simultaneously or use either one solo, which provides three completely different playing styles. The major challenges come at different points during play, depending on which of these modes you choose.

What about those ubiquitous end-of-level beasts? According to Ronald the general trend, as in **Battle Squadron**, is to have a large spaceship moving in lissajous patterns.** Random Access tried to avoid this by having fixed buildings instead. The boys discovered that it was possible to get more variation into bases than flying objects, so different parts of each installation do different things.

Ronald's favourite shoot 'em ups are **Hybris** (It's a bit old now but it was the first real arcade-quality home computer shoot 'em up"), and its successor Battle Squadron (Although it was a bit short, the gameplay and graphics were great"). On the whole he enjoys very basic computer games, such as **PacMan**, **Q-Bert**, **Painter**, **Qix**, and **Tetris**.

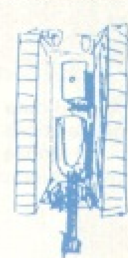
** Lissajous patterns are continually variable curves created by plotting specific mathematical functions. They are useful to programmers and designers because they allow a sprite to be set in motion along a variable path by using only a few lines of code.



THE SEA SECTION demonstrates very nicely the tremendous visual nature of SWIV. Moving the shadows repeatedly away from and towards their respective sprites gives the impression that the alien craft are bouncing over the water.



EVERY NOW AND THEN you run into a major installation. This big son of a gun is one example. The small turrets are easy enough to take out, but those big boys are impenetrable until their shields flip back, and they only do that when they are about to pepper you with laser fire.





HERE'S A NEAT TRICK. The craters caused by exploding vehicles are stored as sprites which are then written into the background data. Now the sprite handler can forget about them while the hardware scrolling takes care of the rest.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

RONALD PIEKET WEESERIK, the programmer behind SWIV, is one of the talented programming progeny of Europe. He comes from a small village just outside Utrecht in The Netherlands. His programming career began in 1985 when he started work on a series of seven MSX titles for Dutch company Eaglesoft.

It was then that he made a name for himself by converting Silkworm on the Amiga followed by **The Ninja Warriors** on the Amiga, before starting work on SWIV with graphic artist Ned Langman.

The Dynamic Loader System which is a major feature of both The Ninja Warriors and SWIV actually made a minor appearance in Silkworm – the backgrounds change dramatically in the last level. Ronald had to find some way of loading in the last background screen during play. In order to make use of all the original The Ninja Warriors' graphics Ronald simply extended the Silkworm loader idea.

For SWIV the system became even more sophisticated – it now loads in sprites as well as backgrounds during play. The sprites and backgrounds that are no longer any use are simply removed from the machine's memory. However, the sprites are different sizes, so the blocks of free memory for storage of sprites being loaded will never be of a guaranteed size. This is where a new system called PMM (Proper Memory Management) compliments DLS. This clever piece of code allocates areas of memory to the sprites and backgrounds being loaded, ensuring that as little memory as possible is wasted and that the program never hangs up if a sprite won't fit.

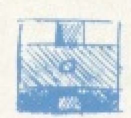
Work on SWIV began in February this year. Ronald began by writing a utility that accepts IFF* screens and allows sprites to be cut out of them. It also builds up the mapping data, but unlike most mapping programs it is not based on squares. The mapper also takes account of the vertical scale and holds collision data.

Now that SWIV is almost out of the way Ronald is going to start work on the conversion of the cute arcade favourite **Rod-Land**. But DLS and PMM certainly haven't been laid to rest. They will both be making a return appearance in the near future. If further projects are as impressive as SWIV then Ronald will be one Dutchman who's flying high.

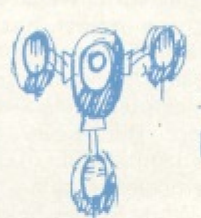
* IFF stands for International File Format. This is the standard way of storing Amiga screen data. Any program on any machine that loads IFF files should be capable of importing Amiga graphics data.

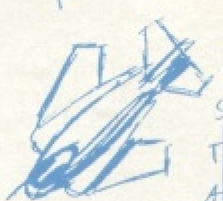


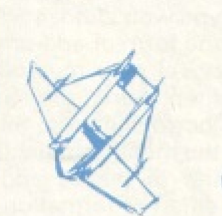


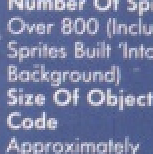












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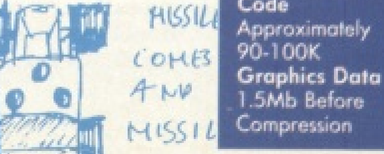
Length Of Playfield
27,136 Pixels (Approximately 106 Screens With No Repeats)

Frame Rate
Continuously Variable
Fastest: 25 Frames Per Second
Slowest: 12.5 Frames Per Second

Number Of Sprites
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Size Of Object Code
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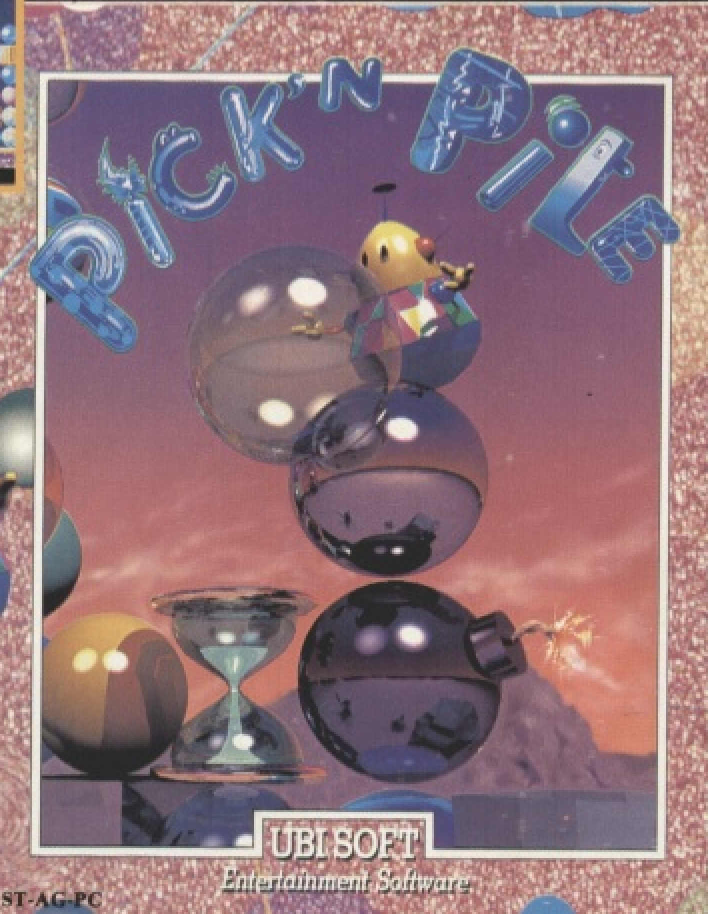
DEST

AMS

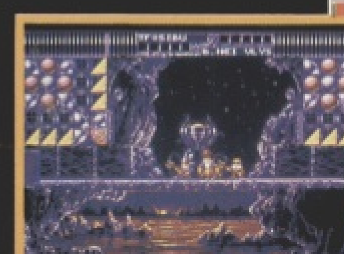


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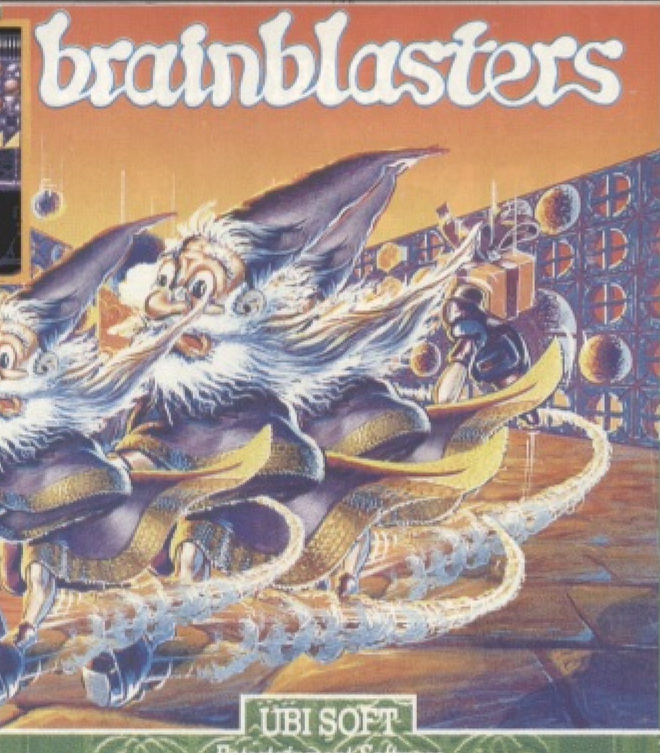


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TBA	

Golden Axe

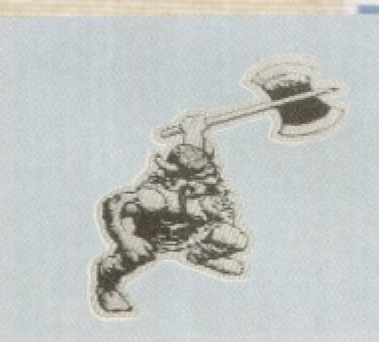


THE MAIN CHARACTERS

HERE THEY ARE in all their glory, as seen in the attract sequence...

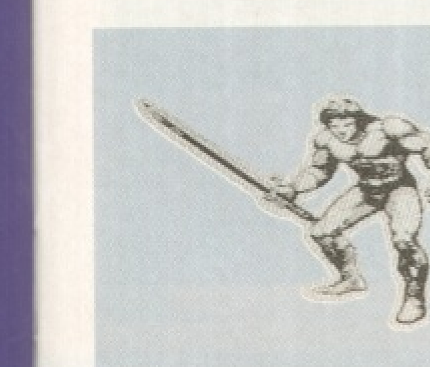


DEATH-ADDER
Scum of the worst sort. One day rain will come down and wash him off the streets.



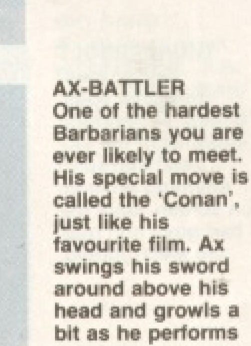


GILIUS-THUNDERHEAD
Like all dwarves he's short. But Gilius packs a big punch with his large axe. His main speciality move is a roll.



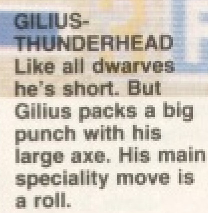


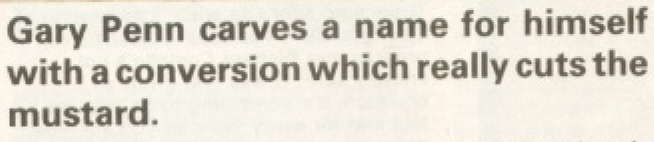
AX-BATTLER
One of the hardest Barbarians you are ever likely to meet. His special move is called the 'Conan', just like his favourite film. Ax swings his sword around above his head and growls a bit as he performs a 180 degree turn.





TYRIS-FLARE
This Amazon's not just a pretty face, oh no. She's as tough as they come. Her special move is pretty much the same as Ax-Battler's, only far more graceful.





Gary Penn carves a name for himself with a conversion which really cuts the mustard.

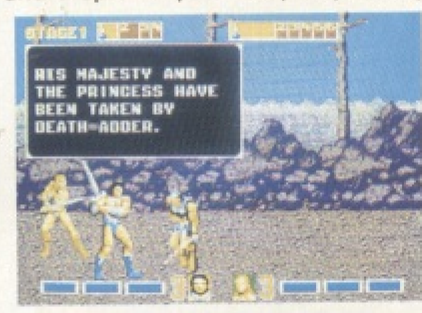
THE TIME IS many, many, many years ago. The place is Yuria – and with a name like that it's no wonder that people take the pee. The man currently giving this land the most stick is the evil Death-Adder.

It was bad enough that he conquered Yuria and killed loads of people, but now he's gone too far. He's kidnapped the King and the Princess and is holding them in his castle. Worse still, Death-Adder's in possession of the Golden Axe, the magical emblem of Yuria. Now he reckons he's going to kill the royalty and smash the axe unless everyone bows down and says he's best. With the King's armies dispersed, who will save the day?

You will, of course. There are three different characters to choose from, all with a score to settle with Death-Adder. First up is Gilius-Thunderhead, a Dwarf who lost his twin brother to Death-Adder's boys. So close to his bro' was Gilius that he wants to kill Death-Adder and then himself! Next we have Ax-Battler, a battle-hardened Barbarian, who returned from a fight to witness his mother's execution at the hand's of Death-Adder's soldiers. Finally, there's Tyris-Flare, an Amazon Warrior Queen and the last of her tribe who were all mercilessly slaughtered by Death-Adder.



Not only do all three have a score to settle, they are all remarkably adept in the way of combat. They can run and jump like a wild horse, and swing a sword or axe with the best of them. But that's not all. There are many more available moves besides, all easily accessed from a single joystick. Some of them are down to proximity – the distance between you and a bad person determines the move you perform, be it an overhead slash or a kick. You can even pick up 'em up and chuck 'em! Better still, why not jump up in the air and drop with your weapon pointing down to inflict maximum pain on anyone below.



But before you get the opportunity to put these supreme fighting skills to the test, a familiar face stumbles onto the screen. It's Alex, bodyguard to the King and Princess. He's managed to escape from the castle, and he tells you of his master's plight... before dropping dead right before your eyes. It's payback time.

Golden Axe comprises five different 'scenarios', split into six 'levels' (just for the record, the arcade original has five levels, but in these conversions the fifth is effective split into two levels due to memory restrictions).

But wherever you are in Yuria, progress is made in the same way. It's all quite neat. During combat the screen stops scrolling. When the fighting's over, a 'GO!' prompt is given, complete with aural warning. Now you 'push' the scrolling until more bad guys are encountered. And so it goes on.

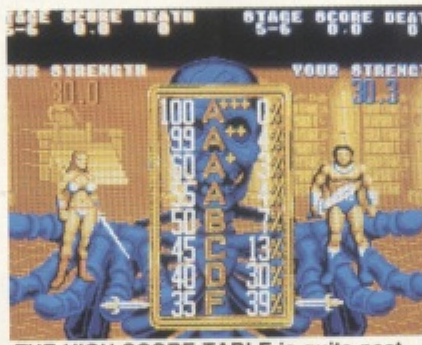


You start in the Woods outside Turtle village. Reach the end and you are shown a map of Yuria, just so you know where you are going. Passing through Turtle Village, you cross Turtle Island (which is on the back of giant turtle) to reach Eagle Island (which is on the back of giant eagle and features gaping chasms to negotiate). Now all that stands between you and a confrontation with Death-Adder is the Castle Approach and the Castle itself...

THERE ARE 95 frames of animation for each of the three good characters. This selection of the Barbarian's movements give you an idea. Note the novel use of 'movement lines' (which are more often associated with cartoons) as a weapon cuts the air.



OCCASIONALLY, little kids run past. You can't kill them, but there's no reason you should as these are good children, running scared from the Dragon Riders who are chasing them out of Turtle village.



THE HIGH-SCORE TABLE is quite neat. There's no score as such, just a rating of Strength. But what does it mean? Even programmer Richard Costello's not entirely sure: "I was just given an equation. It's something to do with the fact that for every monster you kill, you score so many points – one point for a 'normal' monster and two for the bigger ones. This value's multiplied by a Level Factor – obviously how far you got. Now you have number. The sheet of data I originally had said that this number should be divided by the number of energy units remaining and then you add 30. But of course this means that the more healthy you are, the less Strength you get at the end! So I changed it. I divide by the number of health bars lost during play and then add 30, which gives you a score more reflective of your ability. The only problem is, if you manage to play all the way through and end up with all nine health bars you can get a strength of 900 – and it's supposed to be a percentage! All it means is now that anything over a hundred per cent becomes a hundred per cent."

NOW THAT'S MAGIC!

THAT NUMBERED BAR at the top of the screen represents the strength of a player's Magic Power. Each character's Magic Power starts at one unit and is built up by collecting potion pots. You get potion pots from the Elves who make an occasional appearance. They are very nippy, but with skill and cunning you can give them a quick kick and force them to drop their load of potion pots, one at a time, until they run off. All it takes is a press of a key to get the Magic flowing. The magician in question then raises his (or her) hand to the sky and calls on the elements they command. The weaker Magics knock off less of the bad guys' Hit Points than the more powerful Magics, so you have to decide whether to 'save up' for the big 'uns or make do with the little 'uns. Here's a round-up of all the three character's Magics...

GILIUS=THUNDERHEAD

The little fellow is the least adept in the arts and commands only three strengths of Lightning Magic

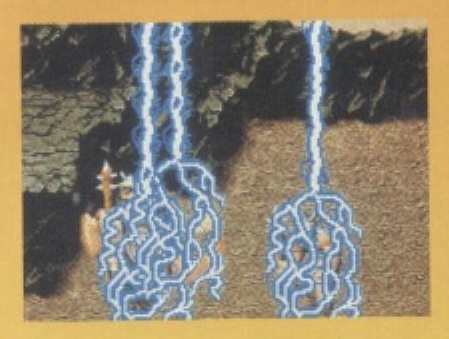
THUNDERWAVE Protects Gilius' head with a 'cage' of lightning while small sparks bounce around his feet, chasing his adversaries around the screen.



THUNDERPOLE Two 'poles' of lightning make their way back and forth across the screen, leaving smoke and injury, and sometimes death, in their wake.



THUNDERBOLT Gilius' most powerful spell. 'Cages' of lightning shoot from the sky and surround anything animate on screen. Only the bad guys and gals are electrocuted.



MOUNTS PLEASANT

SOME OF DEATH=ADDER'S soldiers are mounted on beasts known as Bizarrians. Really good players of Golden Axe can dismount Bizarrian riders and then climb on the beast's back to take advantage of its special attributes. It's great, because the Bizarrians take all your hits for you until you are dismounted. They can all run and jump too. But don't leave a Bizarrian hanging around on its own for too long or it will run off home.



CHICKEN LEG
So called because its legs look like tasty drumsticks. The Chicken Leg thrashes its tail to send the bad guys and gals flying. It also packs a mean peck with its beak when on the run.



RED DRAGON
This one's just like his blue brother, only it's got a bit of problem with its throat and has to gob fireballs across the screen.

AX-BATTLER

He's not too bad with the old Magic is our Ax. He commands four different strengths of Volcano Magic.



CRACK
Small firecracker-like explosions appear all over the place.



LARGE-CRACK
Pretty much the same as Crack, only with small explosions interspersing the 'firecrackers'.



EXPLOSION
A more powerful version of Large-Crack, with – surprise surprise – nothing but those small but by no means harmless explosions blowing up all over the shop.



BIG BANG
Ax-Battler's most potent Magic. This small atomic bomb throws biffy boulders everywhere.

BLUE DRAGON
Like all dragons worth their salt, this one unleashes a plume of fiery breath. It also likes to use its head to butt in on conversations between bad people.

TYRIS-FLARE

Just to keep the feminists happy, the Amazon is the most talented Magic user of the three fighters. She commands a super six strengths of Fire Magic.



FIRE SPARK
A bit girly to look at but very butch in effect. Small sparks spin above Tyris' head before pools of flame appear beneath everyone's feet and drain their energy.



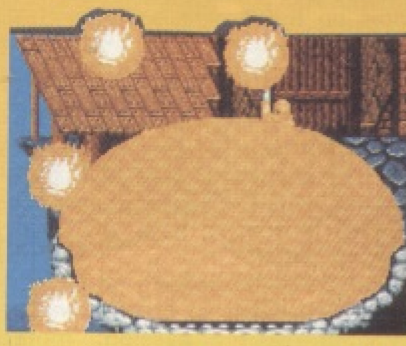
PILLAR OF FIRE
Jets of flame gush up from beneath anything bad and do their stuff.



FIRE GHOST
Two small flame ghosts float around in a spooky, energy-draining manner. Then they double in size and float around some more. Incidentally, in the arcade original the two small ghosts merged to form one big ghost.



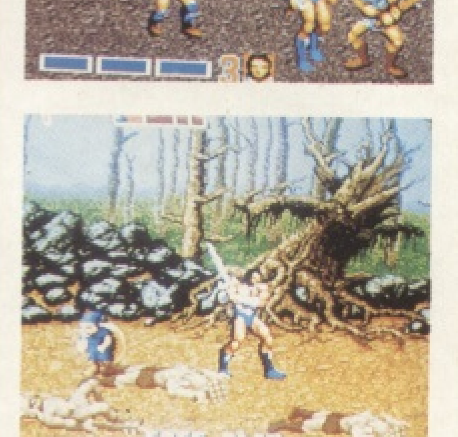
RUNNING FLAMES
Half a dozen or so little bonfires 'run' across the screen, inflicting great pain on all evil beings who get in the way. Time to repent, sinners.

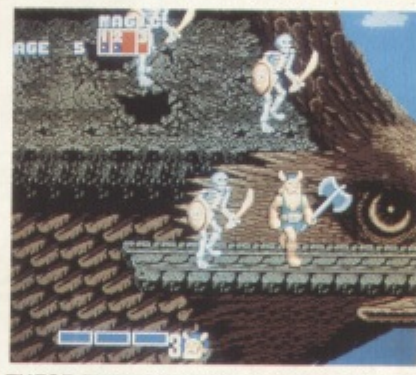


ERUPTION
A large dome of volcanic lava erupts in the centre of the screen.



DRAGON'S BREATH
Tyris' most powerful Magic is a bit wicked. It's giant dragon, whose head can be seen at the top of the screen. He flies across, from right to left, a-roastin' and a-toastin' Death-Adder's boys and girls as he goes.





THESE THREE SHOTS give you an idea of the visual accuracy of Dementia's Amiga conversion (top). The centre shot is taken from Sega's coin-operated original, from which the conversions were eventually produced, while the bottom shot is from the not particularly accurate MegaDrive console conversion.



DEATH-ADDER'S DO-BADDERS

THE BIG BAD MAN'S boys and girls usually attack in pairs, although later on they appear in larger groups. All of these rotten geezers are tough, with pretty much the same repertoire of moves as the good guys (and gal). The different types of adversaries have varying strengths – Hit Points if you will. When they die they turn to stone, before crying out a sampled scream. The girls shriek ("Eeeh!") and the guys grunt ("Uuuh!").



HENINGER
Sports a mace which bears a passing resemblance to a bunch 'grapes' – and he's not afraid to use it. Darker, tougher versions of Heninger appear in the later stages.



LONGMOAN
Why he's called Longmoan is anyone's guess. But that will be the last thing on your mind when this horny-helmeted hassler hits you with his club.



ZUBUROKA
This young lady may looks like a man – in fact, she might as well be seeing as how she's so tough.



SKELETON
There are two types. This white one first appears on the second level. It and its friends appear from holes in the ground in the later stages.



SKELETON
Don't hang around aimlessly for too long or two of these dark skeletons will appear. And boy, are they mean.



BAD BROS
The big, bad bald boys first appear at the end of Level One. They are difficult to hit. They also have an annoying habit of crossing their arms and chuckling away to themselves whenever they knock you down. Smug sods.



LT BITTER
With his shiny armour and shield, Lt Bitter is well equipped for a good scrap. So don't go easy on him – relegate him to the heap where he belongs.

THE AXE MEN ARE HERETH

DEMENTIA IS THE NAME of the team behind the Amiga and Atari ST conversions of Golden Axe for Virgin Games. Kevin Bulmer does the drawing (you can find out more about him from the **Corporation** Work In Progress in Issue 21), while Richard Costello likes to type in all those letters and numbers that make up what we in the know call 'code'.

Richard's programming career began way, way back with educational software. Then, one day, he woke up. Someone asked him to convert **Way Of The Exploding Fist** (remember that!) to the C16 (remember *that*!), so he did. He then went on to write a bit of Logotron's (now Millennium) **Xor** on the BBC, C64 and Atari ST, before starting work on **RamRod** for Gremlin (it's still unfinished – in fact, it's unlikely to be).

Golden Axe isn't Richard's first coin-p conversion. He made a rather good job of doing Atari Games' **Gauntlet II** on the Amiga and Atari ST for US Gold, and he even found time to convert Sega's **Hotrod** to the Amiga and Atari ST for Activision.

Work on Golden Axe began in March of this year. Richard had the MegaDrive console version for reference, which he'd more or less converted by the time someone realised that it should be a conversion of the arcade original instead.

"The MegaDrive version's not quite like the coin-op," he explains. "It's a cut-down version of sorts, but with two extra levels, and when you beat Death=Adder you carry on and meet another one. Oh, and the end sequence isn't as good as the coin-op's."

Fortunately, changing his work to date from MegaDriveness to arcade originality didn't present much of a problem as he only had to tweak it to make it the same as the Real Thing. Cramming in all the arcade version's data was the real problem. "In the coin-op there's 512K of program, 512K of sound, 0.5Mb of background data, and 2Mb of sprite data. The Amiga conversion, which runs at about 25 frames per second at best and 17 at worst, has come out as 64K of program, 48K of sound, 210K of background data, and... let's see, there's 64K for each player sprite... 32K per monster... it's about 450K of sprite data."

> **"I was thinking about a Le Mans Simulator, where you'd have to sit through a full 24-hour race."**
> **Dementia's Richard Costello**

Surely having to put all that stuff from the big and hard arcade machine into a poxy little home computer has meant that he's had to leave stuff out? "No, not really. The only major difference is minor graphical details. There's a 16-colour background with 16-colour sprites on the Amiga, and the ST's 16-colour overall with a character scroll – there wasn't enough memory to make it any smoother. There are only really major differences between the conversions and the MegaDrive version. The MegaDrive version doesn't have monsters turning to stone when the die. It doesn't have the black skeletons either."

When he's not working on Golden Axe, Richard likes to unwind with a simulation of his passion: motor racing. "I've been playing **Indianapolis 500** on the Amiga, that's quite nice. I'd love to write a racing game – I'm well into motor sports – but I'm a perfectionist so I'd want to do it right, and the hardware just isn't up to it. I was thinking about a Le Mans simulator, where you'd have to sit through a full 24-hour race. But I don't think anyone'd want to market it!"







A SO IT'S HERE at last, eh. The home computer conversion of the beat 'em up that's kept arcade-goers and Sega MegaDrive console owners as happy as sandboys for ages. It's not surprising really, as Golden Axe is basically a version of everyone's favourite beat 'em up, **Double Dragon**, but with bells on the size of Big Ben. And the good news is that all the elements that make the Real Thing so much fun are all here in this conversion: the simplistic but entertaining gameplay, the great feel – even the arcade original's elaborate end sequence (which didn't appear on MegaDrive version). The fighting's straightforward, but not so simple as to make the going too repetitive. It's all down to timing, which means if the more elaborate moves prove too much you can always resort to using a few basic moves to see you through. The only minor gripe is the frequent disk accessing, although to be fair it doesn't actually affect the flow of the action to the point of frustration. What a diamond conversion. A better bout of combat you are unlikely to have seen this year. Unmissable.

ST WHAT YOU see here isn't quite what you can expect to get, although the differences aren't likely to drastically affect the playability. This version's got 16 less colours, and a panel of sorts "to make scrolling easier". Music is provided via the hardware, but the tunes aren't quite good anyway, so it should sound too bad. All the sound effects are sampled, exactly same as Amiga, only they will be "a little bit clickier". There's no STE support, for the simple reason that Dementia "ran out of time. It wouldn't be too difficult to make the scroll smooth – obviously there's the hardware scroll to make it easier."



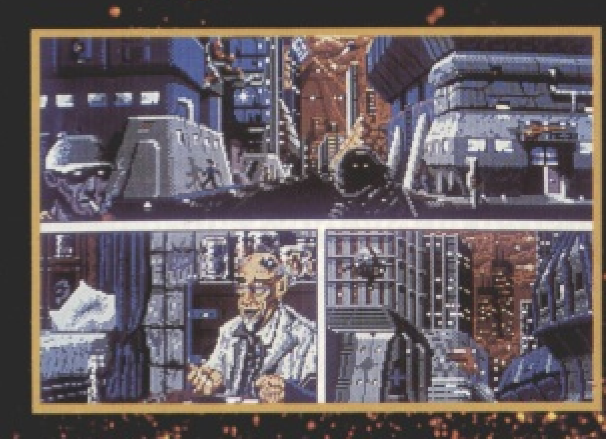
PC IT DOESN'T look as though Virgin is going to be producing a version for this machine and its compatible chums. That said, it may yet happen. We will keep you posted.



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EARTH, 22nd century.

You are about to embark on an exciting and dangerous adventure. The Bureau of Astral Troubleshooters has selected you as their special agent.
Your mission : to find and destroy Vrangor, the evil genius who is threatening the people of the planet Selenia.



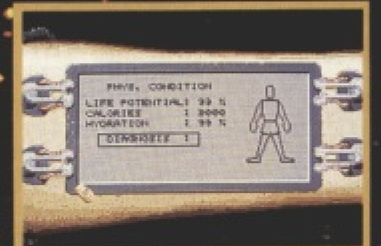


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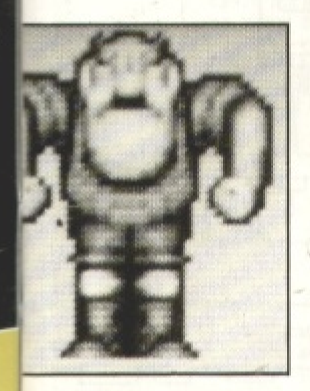
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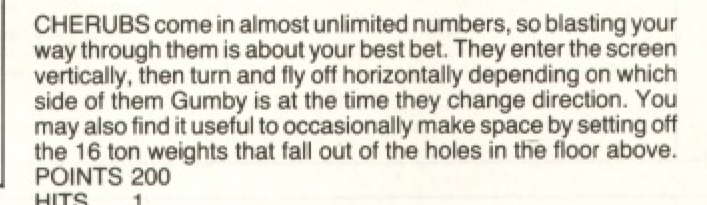
The third and penultimate part in Python programmer-designer Simon Phipps' guide...

"ON LEVEL THREE it's back to blasting, but here your timing is rather important considering the number of adversaries Gumby faces.

"Search every conceivable exit off-screen to get to hidden bonus screens and try to take out every block of cheese for end of level bonuses.

"Take advantage of the Lupins – they remove many creatures and generate plenty of food bonuses.

"The Gumby-bird control is very similar to that of Gumby-fish, only the bird drifts slowly down the screen."



CHERUBS come in almost unlimited numbers, so blasting your way through them is about your best bet. They enter the screen vertically, then turn and fly off horizontally depending on which side of them Gumby is at the time they change direction. You may also find it useful to occasionally make space by setting off the 16 ton weights that fall out of the holes in the floor above.
POINTS 200
HITS 1

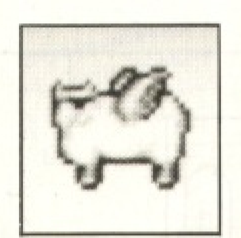


LITTLE MEN sit and fire regular sprays of three bullets at you. It's recommended that you find ways of ducking down and out of the way of their bullets, and then popping back up to let loose a fish. This requires timing, but it's most probably the safest method to deal with them. The more gung-ho players may favour killing the Little Men with a carefully activated 16-ton weight... However you kill them, you end up with a food bonus when they expire.
POINTS 400
HITS 6



HELL'S GRANNIES are invulnerable. They hang upside down from ropes and explode should Gumby get too close.

UPPER CLASS TWITS move vertically only, but turn to face Gumby so there's no nipping around the back of them to get some shots in. The best tactic for these is to use cheese blocks as cover from their bullets, lobbing the odd well-placed halibut between the gaps in the blocks. Some of the Upper Class Twits reward you with a food bonus when shot, but you have to be quick to collect it before it falls off-screen.
POINTS 400
HITS 6

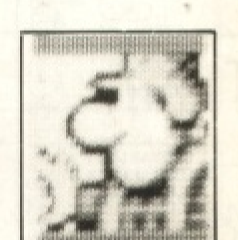


BY A STRANGE twist of program design the Flying Sheep operate in virtually the same manner as the Piggy Banks on Level One. They fire vertically in Gumby's direction, but when they fire is decided at random. The best tactic for Flying Sheep is to try to get rid of them as soon as they appear. It's also quite helpful to let them gather in groups behind cheese blocks, so that when the block is shot away the flock quickly goes off to the left, giving Gumby a reprieve from the constant triggering of sheep.
POINTS 200
HITS 2

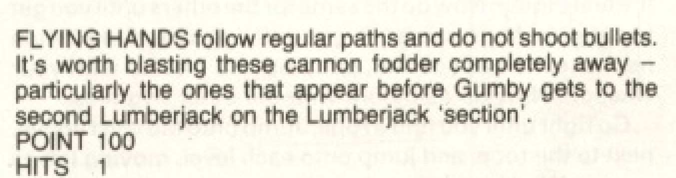


CONSTANTLY produced by the Gas Cooker at the end of the section in question, Gasmen shuffle left across the screen. However, should Gumby get in a vertical line with one of them, he automatically launches himself up the screen straight at Gumby. Gasmen explode on contact with the landscape, so it's not altogether a bad idea to hide from them by ensuring that there are some cheese blocks between them and Gumby.
POINTS 200
HITS 2

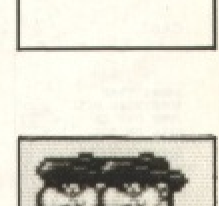
THE GAS COOKER ultimately turns into a SPAM bonus. You can't exit this section without killing the Cooker. It generates Gasmen at an alarming rate along with the odd trajectory bullet. Tactics for this one are to lead its fire and Gasmen by placing Gumby to the left of it, doing your best to get a shot in at it when you can. Then once, say, two or three Gasmen are heading towards Gumby, fly up and to the right, above the Cooker – this makes the Gasmen launch up the screen. As soon as it's safe to do so, fly quickly back left to the position you were in and repeat the method. The trick here is to not try and blast away the Gasmen, but to get shots in on the Cooker and get rid of the Gasmen by forcing them to fly up and off the screen. The trajectory bullets should take care of themselves. But watch out for them, they still hurt.
POINTS 1000
HITS 15



LUMBERJACKS always appear in the windows in the background and throw three regular sprays of pressed flowers, followed by an axe. It takes eight hits to kill a Lumberjack, so it's a matter of positioning Gumby so that fish may be hurled during the time the sprays of flowers are thrown. Bear in mind that the axes follow an unusual arc which forces Gumby out of line with the Lumberjacks. The trick here is to get back in line as fast as possible after each axe has been thrown.
POINTS 600
HITS 8



FLYING HANDS follow regular paths and do not shoot bullets. It's worth blasting these cannon fodder completely away – particularly the ones that appear before Gumby gets to the second Lumberjack on the Lumberjack 'section'.
POINT 100
HITS 1



AS IF YOU hadn't expected it, the Spanish Inquisition are back once more, hurling pillows and turning into SPAM when shot. To exit the Lumberjack 'section', completely remove the Spanish Inquisition – a task which requires similar timing to that employed earlier with the Lumberjacks themselves. Position Gumby in line with the Spanish Inquisitor to get some shots in, allowing the feathers from the exploding pillows to fly past him. Every fourth pillow is thrown with a slightly different trajectory, such that the feathers from the pillow cover the space Gumby occupies, so it's a good idea to learn the timing, anticipate the shots and move away as quickly as possible. As with the Lumberjacks, returning to your relatively safe position as quickly as possible determines how quickly you can kill them all.
POINTS 1000
HITS 15

IF YOU SEE a Baby Gangster, take it out as quickly as possible. Baby Gangsters are produced by the end-of-level gangster chicken, Eggs Diamond. Position yourself at the top of their movement arc and let loose a couple of fish!
POINTS 100
HITS 2



AS MENTIONED, Eggs Diamond is dangerous and constantly spawns a great many lethal offspring as well as a fair few bullets. This piece of not-so-paltry poultry isn't terribly difficult to kill, as long as you can maintain a position that gets hits on the Baby Gangsters as well as Eggs herself.
POINTS 1000
HITS 15

NEXT MONTH: The Fourth And Final Part

KEY

- P — ENERGY POTION
- COINS — SOME MONEY
- LOCKED DOOR
- OPEN DOOR
- SP — SPEAR THROWING PIGMY
- P — PIGMY (IN PIGMY WOOD)
- TREE
- MUSHROOM
- ENTERING NEW AREA
- STOOL
- TABLE
- MOVABLE/BREAKABLE PLATFORM
- BLOB (SHOOT IT)
- H — HOBGOBLIN (ARROW SHOWS DIRECTION OF MOVEMENT)
- DB — DEATH BAT
- SWITCH
- CAGE
- SHOWS THAT SOMETHING WILL JUMP OUT OR FALL ON YOU
- ACID (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)
- KEY
- ROPE
- CHANDELIER
- B — BAT
- SB — SMALL BATS
- CAPTURED MAN

Shadow Of The Beast 2

Struggling to combat Psygnosis' second beastly arcade adventure? Here's Philip Baxter and Russell Lazzari with a complete solution...

FROM THE VERY BEGINNING... go left through the trees towards the bridge. Data will now load. At the bridge, wait until you have identified the highest jumping fish and then wait for it to appear on the left. Now jump onto the bridge and jump until you reach the other side.

DO NOT kill the person being held by the beam but kill the guy holding him. Ask the person you saved about 'TRAP' and he will tell you which switch to push later on (write it down). Now fall into the hole to the left. Walk left and turn around and kill the bats. Do the same for each step down.

Go to the bottom of the rope and jump left. DON'T fall in the acid. When the person firing at you appears, duck down and shoot him until he falls off the edge (jump if he ducks), and do the same for the next person. Collect the energy bottle and use it if necessary.

Enter the house and go left up the stairs. Collect the ale. Go out of the house and go back to where you started from (this time there are no people or bats). Go right until you meet the Pygmies. From about two inches away from them, jump towards them, over the spear that's thrown, and kill the first Pigmy. Now do the same for the others until you get to a log-like floor where a Pygmy is flying above you. When he moves to each corner, jump up and hit him with your weapon. Now do as before with the other Pygmies.

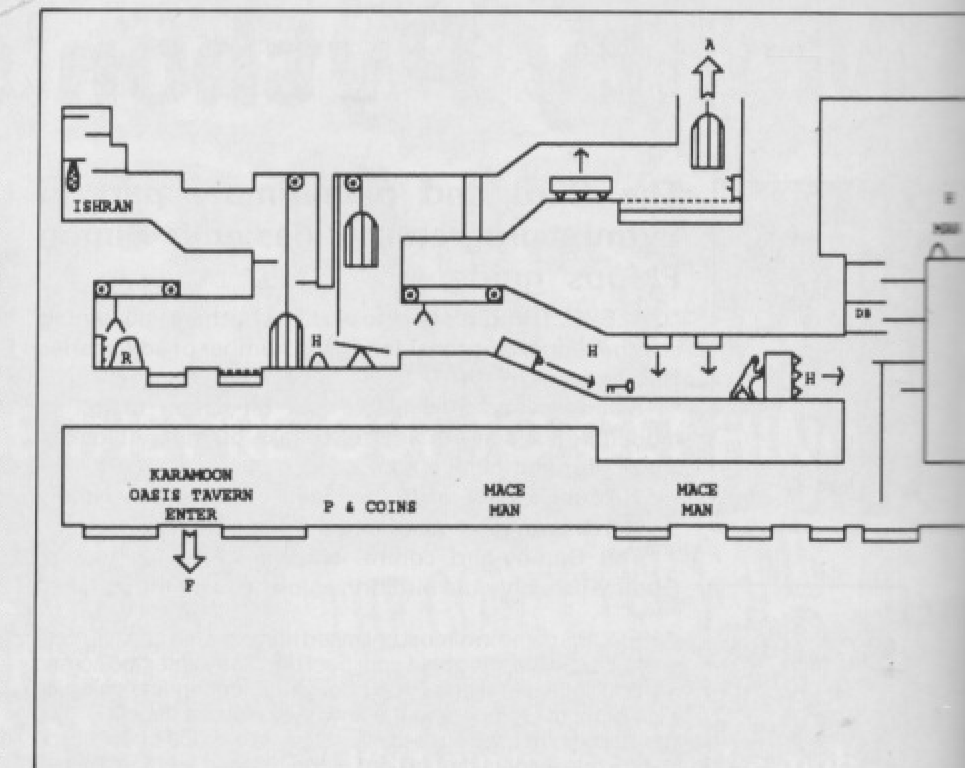
Go right until you find a rope. Jump onto the level above, next to the rope, and jump onto each level, moving left as you go. When on the level with an enemy, go left until you are behind the chest of coins and kill the enemy. Collect the coins and the axes he leaves behind then jump onto a short rope hanging above. Jump until you are next to a solid lump of slime from roof to floor. Shoot the slime then go right and collect the coins and energy bottle. Go back down to the ground level. Go left until you are under a short level with a hole below and twigs on top of it. Jump up and fall through the hole. Go down. Data will now load.

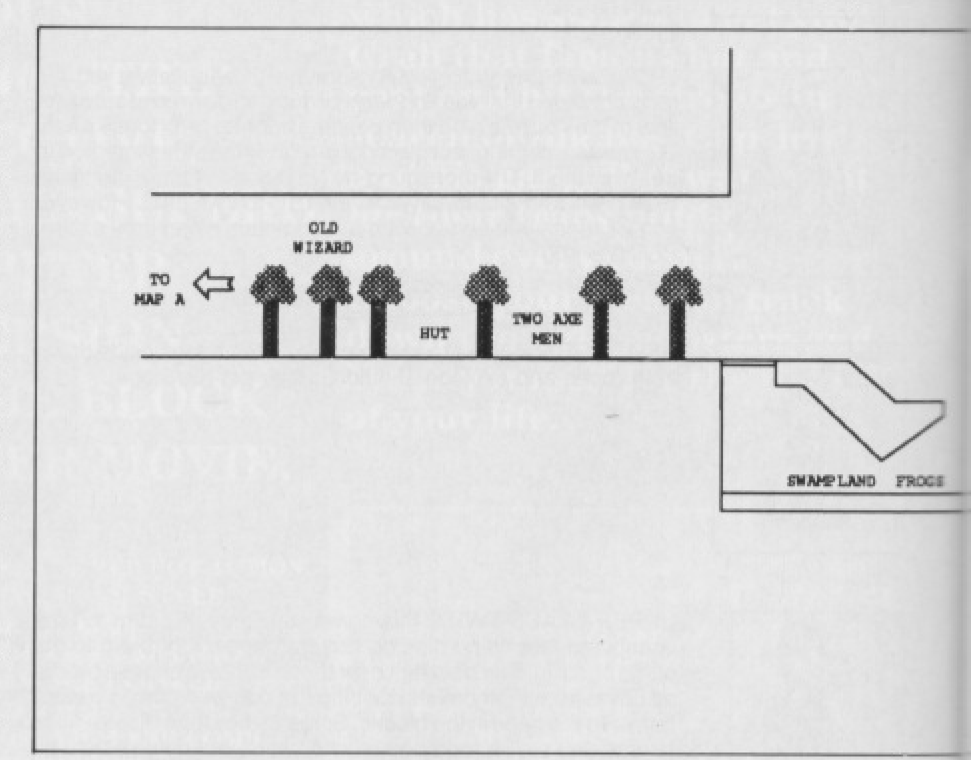
Move to the edge of the floor next to the water. Jump across, firing as you go to shoot the crystals that appear from the water. Collect the energy and use it if necessary. Run until you come to the end of the water. Activate your axes before walking over the bridge.

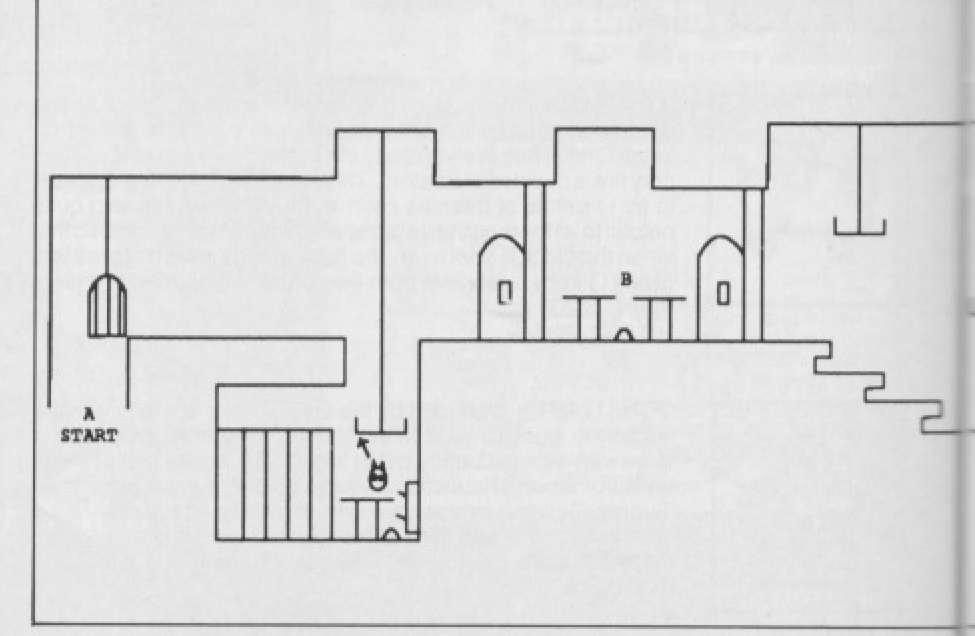
A man will run away. Follow him until you get to the steel drawbridge. Jump up to kill the drawbridge winder in the top left corner (NOT the two people above you). Move back and jump the gap then kill the two people above you. Go back along the drawbridge and kill the last man. Shoot the stone door until it crumbles away.

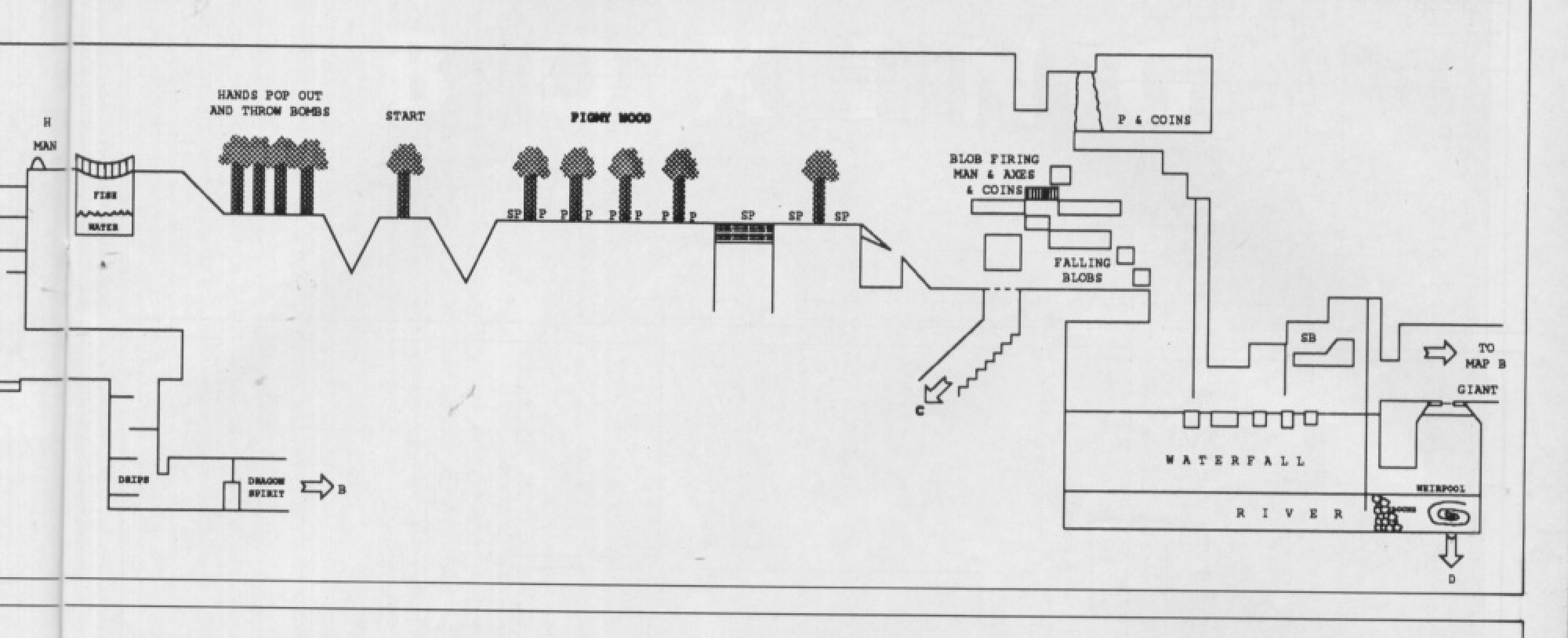
Go left. Jump onto the light and up again until you see a sign saying 'SPIKES' (to the right, next to the lights). Climb the light and shoot the switch next to the sign. Now run as quickly as possible across to the left until you come to a residential area of sorts. Still hurrying, shoot to the left and hit the switch, running back before your time runs out (NEVER stay at the other end after you have only three seconds left – this may take several attempts).

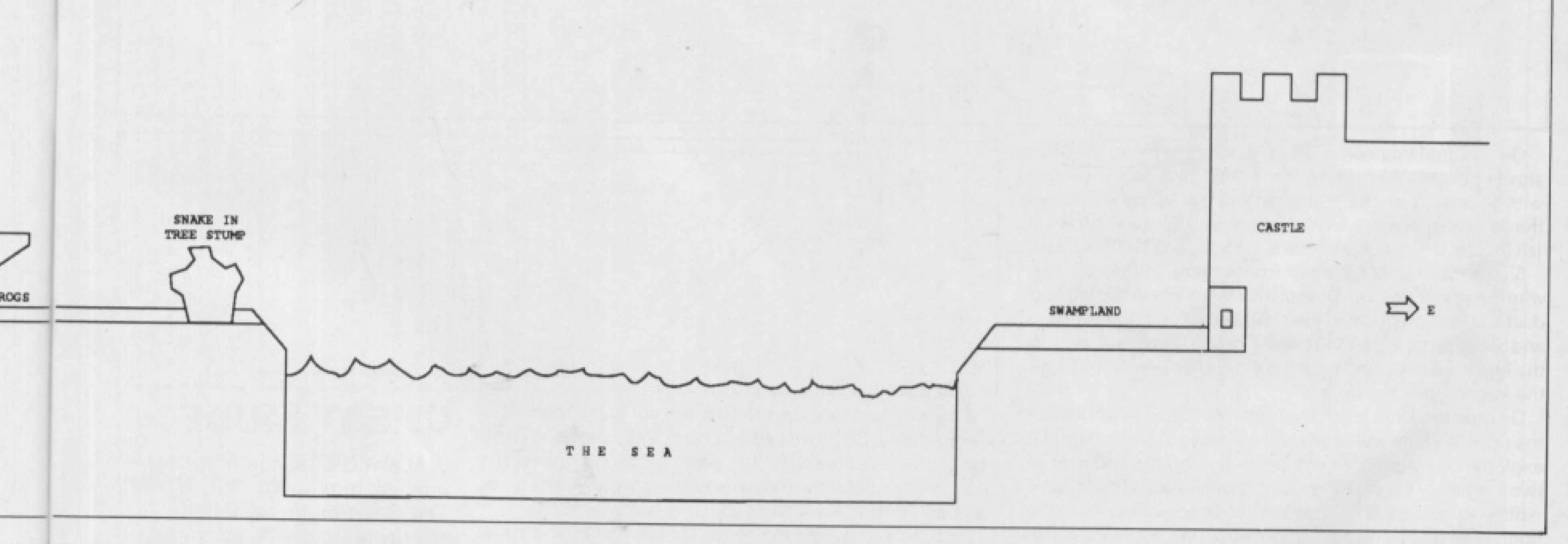
Run back and down one level. Go left and fall onto the chain holding up the lights above the four men sitting down. Fall off the rope between the four men and shoot each one. Go right and collect the key. Go back and jump onto the chain again (don't shoot the guards coming towards you). Wait until the guards are below you. Jump to the left, past the guards and under the cage which falls onto you (you can now do nothing until you are in jail).

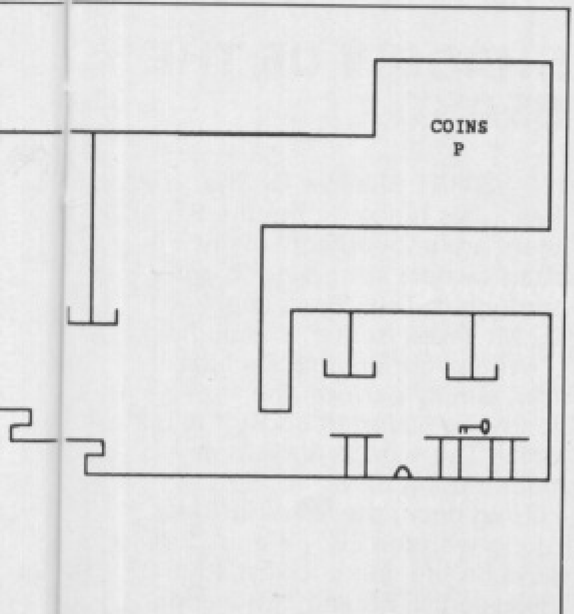


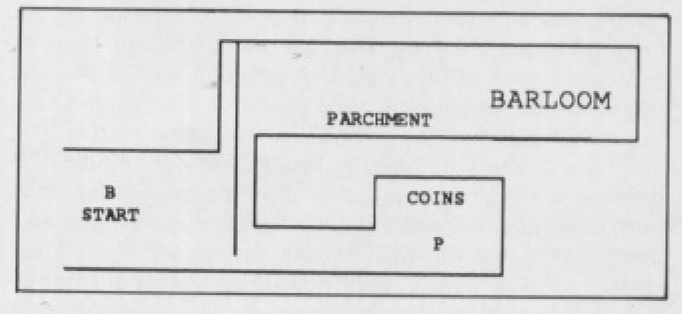












Offer the ale to the person guarding the jail. He drinks it and falls asleep. Now shoot the door until it flies off. Quickly climb the chain above the sleeping guard and shoot the man at the top who's firing at you (do this before the man in the jail with you gets to the top and gets killed by the man above). DO NOT kill the man in the jail.

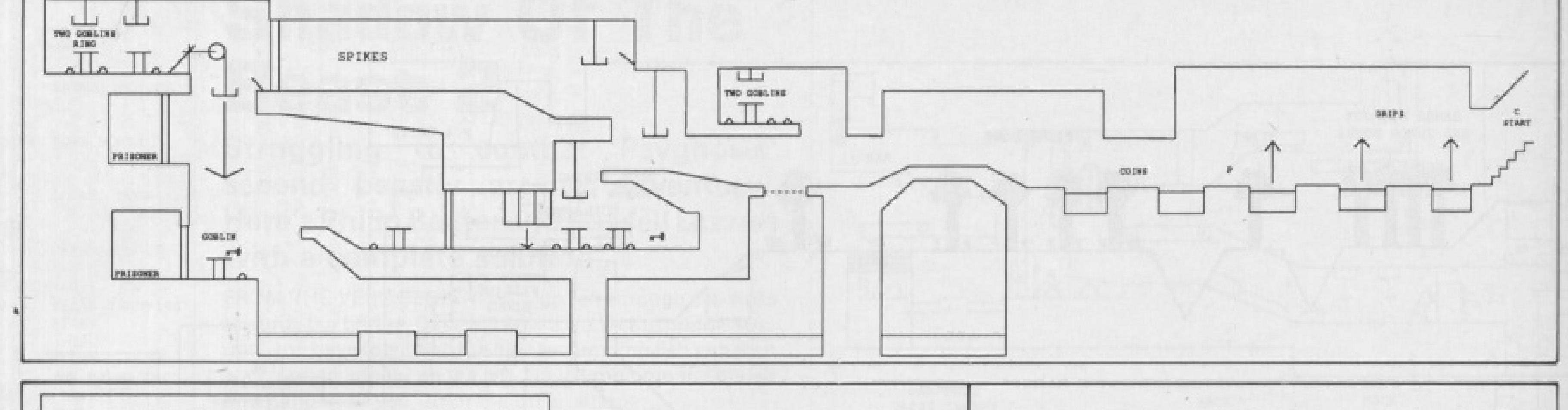
Kill the sleeping guard and collect the key he throws away. Climb up the chain until you find a level just below the 'surface'. Use the key to set free the other prisoner. Now go to the top and jump left. Kill the two guards then collect the ring on the table. Now go back to the door the two prisoners are trying to open and use the key to open it. Wait until both men are through the door before following them about an inch behind. They both get killed on the spikes but you don't (well, normally).

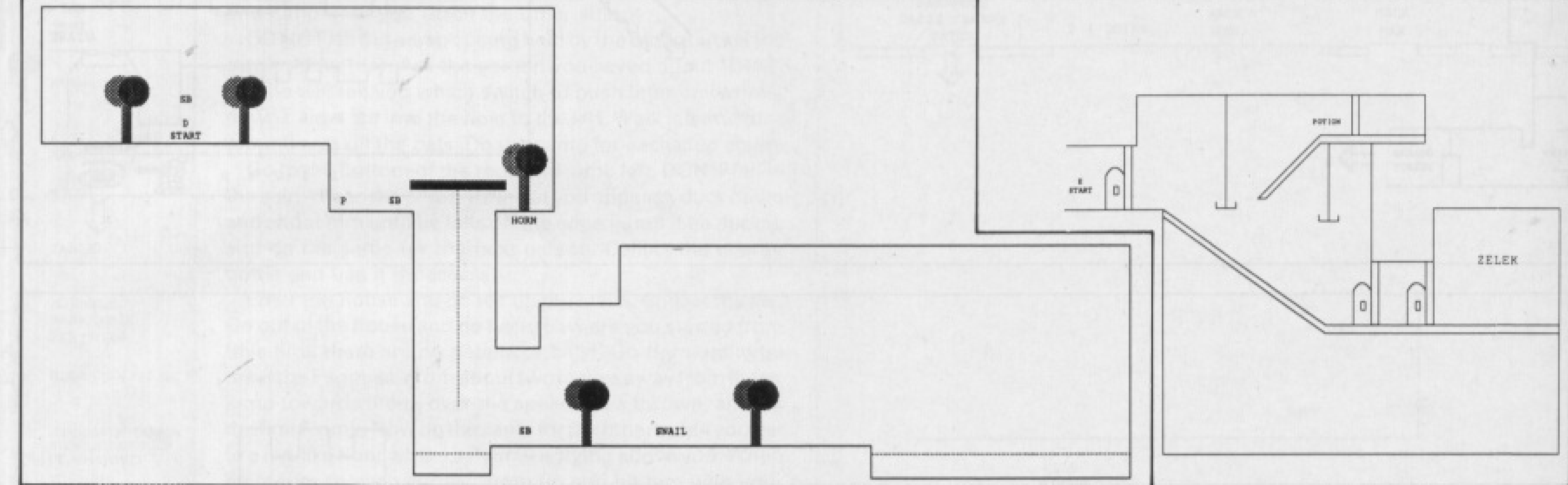
Go back the way you came, past the crystals in the water, and out. Go right to the next set of rocks and kill the head firing at you. Jump right again but watch the first rock. It's an animal, so jump onto the furthest rock, NOT the first one. Jump onto the rope (above and to the right) and climb until you find another rope. Jump onto it, then jump right again and onto the level below and to the right. Data will now load.

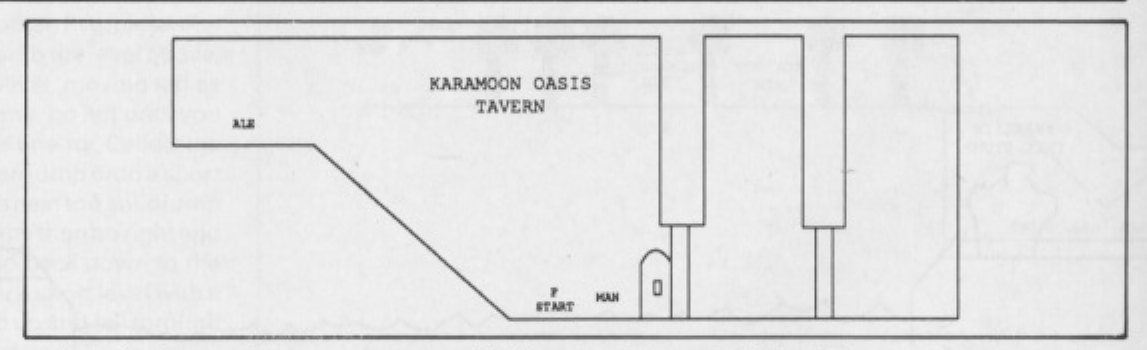
Walk to the man with the knife until he follows you over the bridge (left) you passed earlier. He will fall through the bridge. Go right and give the ring to the old man.

Go back the way you came, to the very beginning, over the bridge and down the hole, this time jumping to the left on the first level you pass. Walk left and duck the flying creature, turning to kill him before he cuts the rope.

Stay at the end of the platform and wait for the person pushing the spiked stone to come towards you. Just before he comes towards you, shoot him several times to kill him (only at the edge).







Go left until you come to two hatches in the roof. Move slowly towards them and a stone falls out. Shoot the stone with short taps on the firebutton while pushing left. When the stone explodes you will move left and another stone will fall in front of you. Do as before. Go left. Data will now load.

Shoot the stones falling in front of you and the person who hovers above you. Collect the key he leaves. Go left and duck the rock on the conveyer belt. Jump onto the see-saw and over the person sitting there – he will fly away. Climb up the first rope and jump onto the platform to your right. Use the key to open the door.

Go right until you reach the top of the hill. Slowly move to the right. A stone will drop from above you. Shoot it until it explodes. Go right until you are over a bridge and next to two switches. Press the relevant switch (you should have written it down earlier). The cage above you will move to the floor. Walk into it and wait. It will move upwards with you in it. Data will now load.

Walk onto the platform at the top and go right as far as you can go without falling down the gaps. Go through the doors until you collect a key. Go to the room above and pick up the coins. Go back until you find a chain leading to a table where a man sleeps and a dog is in a cage. Jump left while on the chain to land next to the cage without waking the guard. Use the key on the cage and quickly jump back onto the chain. The dog will come out and frighten off the guard. Go back down and flick the lower switch without being hit by the dog. Go out and back down in the cage to the bridge.

Go down the rope then left over the little bridge and over the acid until you come to three switches, a crane, and a stone. Grab the stone and lift it using the switches. Move the stone across to the right and drop it (it should break and leave a smaller stone). Push the small stone to the right and onto the see-saw. The stone will fly up into a cage. Quickly run to the cage on the ground (left) and stand in it. You will move up.

Go left until you meet the dragon Ishran. Kill it. Now shoot the hanging bag. A man should come out and tell you a word. Write this down.

Go back down past the see-saw and out to the rope. Data will now load. Go down to the bottom of the rope and jump right, down the hole with little green blobs. Go right to the dragon spirit. Enter the password you were given. The block rises so you can walk through. Data will now load.

Go right and collect the coins. Go left and up the rope. Collect the parchment. Go back to the very beginning and to the right to the old man. Give him the parchment. He will give you a spell to kill Zelek. Use the spell now as it is an unlimited weapon and is very powerful. Go left and fall through the hole in the bridge. Data will now load.

Go right, down the hole, and collect the potion (use it if necessary). Now go right, over the hole, and collect the horn. Go down the hole and jump right then go to the snail. Ask him about 'KARAMOON' and answer 'YES' or 'Y' to both of his questions. You will now be back at the old man's hut.

Go right. Kill both of the guards whilst shooting the mace at them. Once perfected, this method will enable you to lose only a small amount of energy. Go right and fall off the edge of the land, into the swamp. Go right, and use the spell to kill the frogs. When you reach the end, use the horn. A creature will rise up from the sea. Get on its back. When you reach the other end, data will load. Enter the castle.

Go down the stairs and up the other side. Collect the potion (use it). Go back down, down the next one and through two doors. Kill Zelek with the spell. You have now won. The end message is yours to read.

CHEAT MODE

WALK RIGHT to the first Pygmy and ask him about 'TEN PINTS'. The cheat mode for infinite energy will now be activated.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST

NOW THAT **Shadow Of The Beast** has made it onto the ST, there are undoubtedly many Atari owners struggling to get through it. This cheat, supplied by Mr K Lee Hunter, should help.

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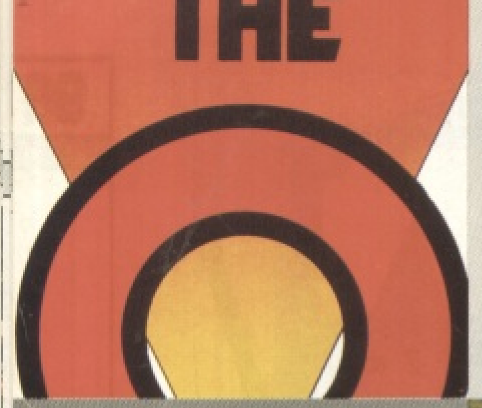
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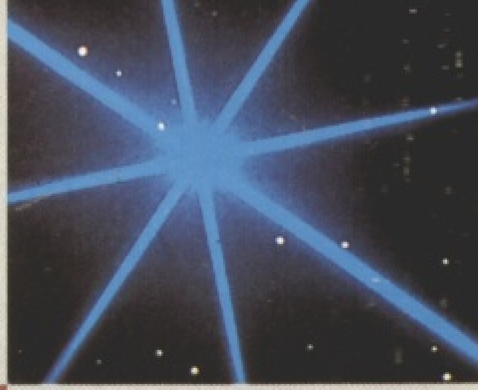
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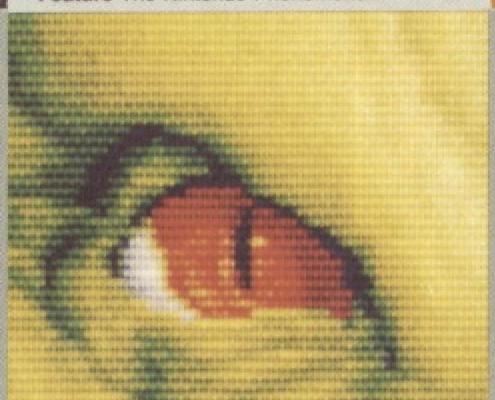




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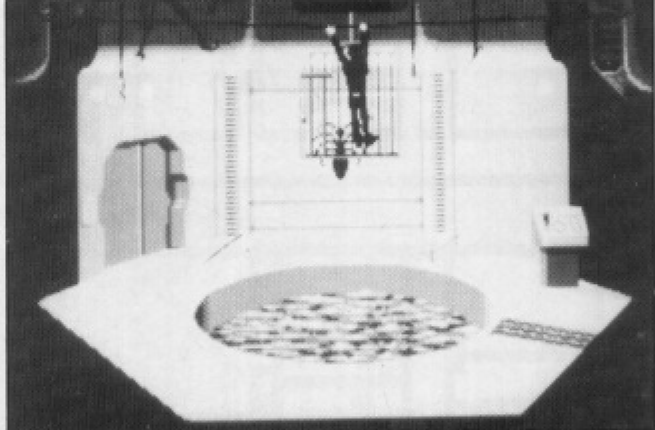
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Operation Stealth

At last! The third and final instalment of this thrilling solution, courtesy of Paul Presley.

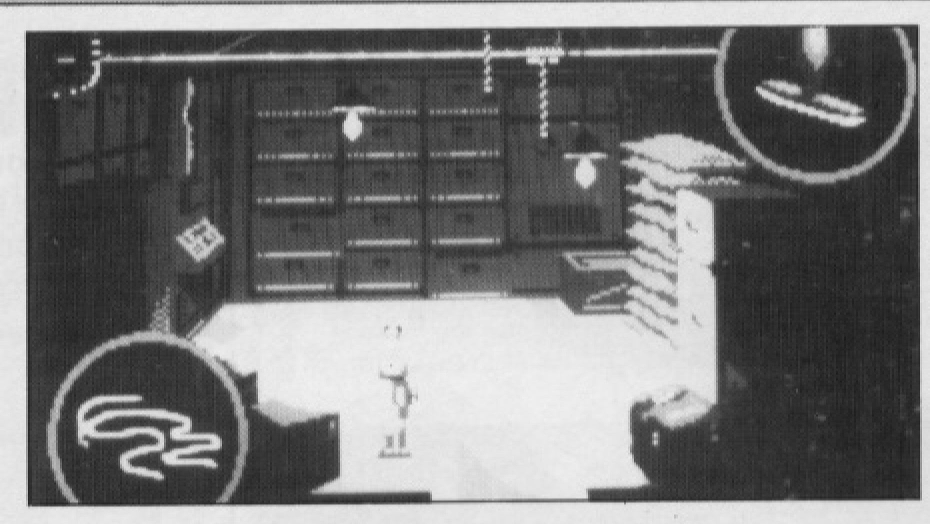
UH OH! PIRANHA! These devils can eat a human body within three minutes... John Glames looked like being their next meal as the cage above the infested pool was slowly lowered. Having just discovered the whereabouts of the missing Stealth plane, Glames had been captured by SPYDER agents and held for questioning. Otto wasn't nearly as menacing as the fish below him, but Glames would make certain he would pay for leaving him to die on the sea bed – provided he could get out of the cage first.



THE LOCK on the cage door wasn't too tough and the acid from Glames' pen soon melted it away. The small room had two exits, the door and the air vent. Firing his grappling hook watch into each wall he managed to crawl along the wire towards the grille. The door would be guarded and Glames didn't fancy any more bruises. Opening the covering grille he made his way into the vent, the noise of the piranhas bubbling around the cage behind him.

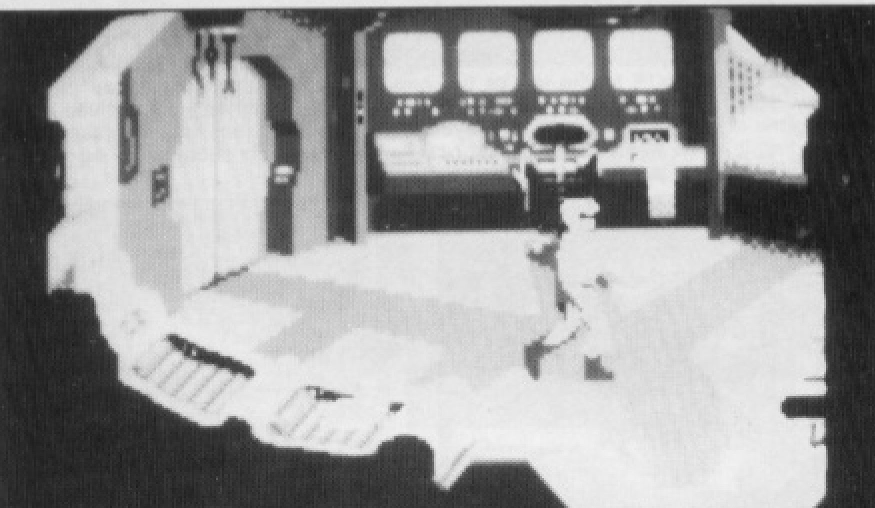
THE VENTILATION system was rat-infested. Glames hated rats. The engineers left spanners at points in the system so that hatches to different levels could be opened. Despite the fact that he could barely see his hand in front of his face, Glames realised that a series of interlocking grilles, running throughout the system, could be used to trap some of the rats. Strange, he thought – something reminded him of the palace guards.

EVENTUALLY an exit led into the guards' shower room. Glames crawled quietly out of the air vent, only to find a guard shaving nearby. He had to be taken out, so Glames efficiently overpowered him and tied him up with the laces from the guard's boot – thank heaven for large feet! Stuffing a towel into his mouth to prevent the guard crying for help, Glames took a spare uniform, the boots, and a glass from the sink before making his way into the heart of the enemy base.

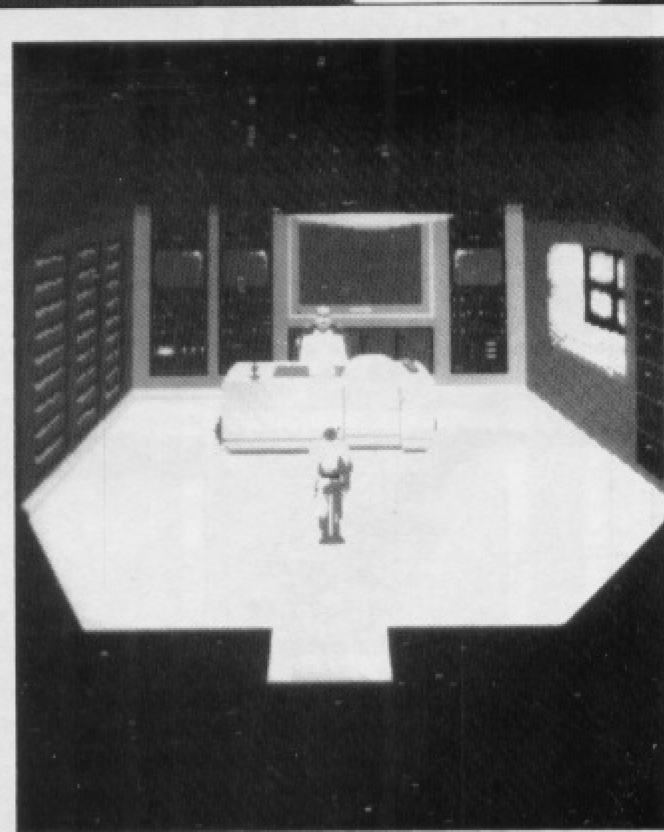


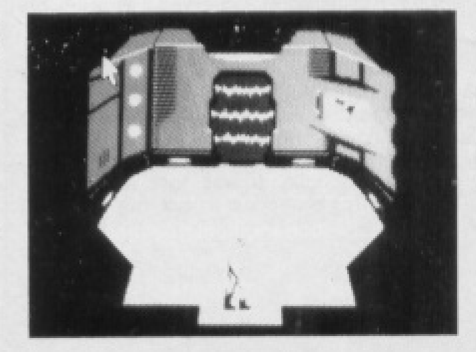
KEEPING A low profile, Glames made his way around the base. The first door he found led to a stockroom. Looking through some of the drawers didn't reveal much – rubber stamps, and spare pairs of shoelaces. He took a pair and used them on his boots. He didn't want to be caught out of uniform.

GLAMES FROZE as he turned a corner to face a group of officers. He thought his disguise would be penetrated for sure but incredibly one of the officers ordered him to fetch a glass of water. Glames hurried away before his luck ran out. Finding a guardroom with a water fountain, he filled the glass from the bathroom and started to leave when something caught his eye. On a bed lay some mission orders – a useful bluffing tool if he got caught somewhere he shouldn't be.

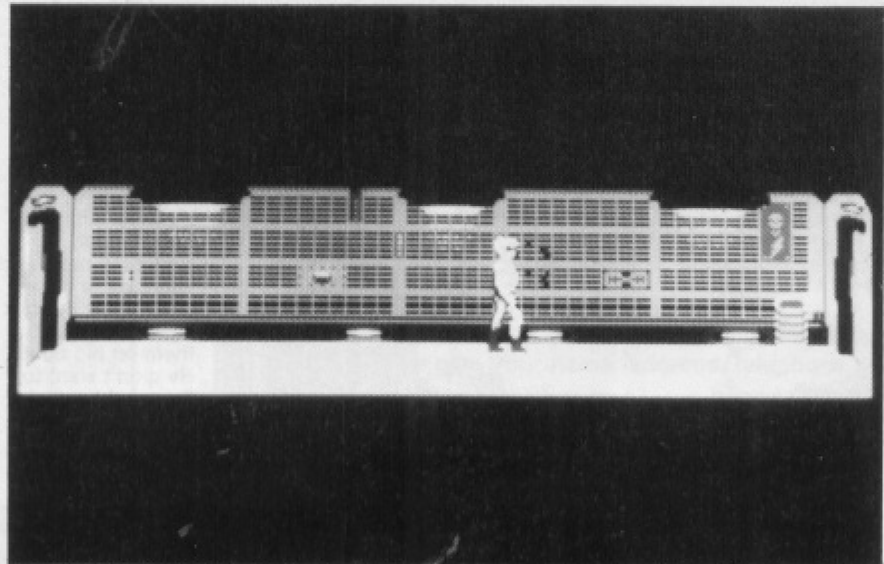


ENTERING the officer's room Glames spied another rubber stamp on the desk. It would go perfectly with the fake orders. Handing over the water, Glames hastily swapped it with his blank stamp, avoiding the gaze of the officer. Making his way back to the guardroom, he used an ink pad to stamp the orders. Then, using one of the blue-tipped cigarettes, he removed the tobacco and used the paper to take a fingerprint from the empty glass. As he was leaving, Glames spotted a small, inflatable lifeboat. Unsure why, he pocketed it anyway.

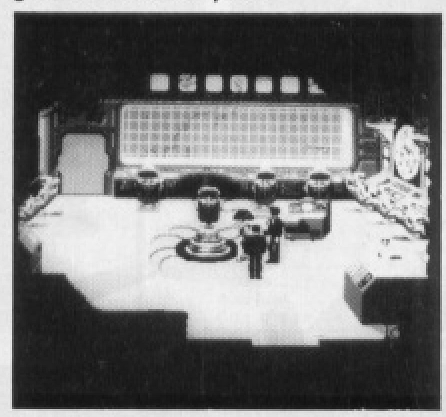




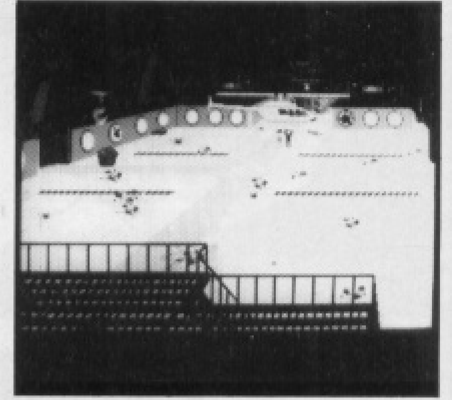
BYPASSING the security door with the fake fingerprint, Glames made his way down a corridor into a room with one guard and a laser-covered door. Passing the 'official' orders through a small slot, Glames hoped that the bluff would work. The CIA's plans had indicated that the main control room in this direction. The guard switched off the lasers and motioned him through the door. Glames let out a sigh of relief.



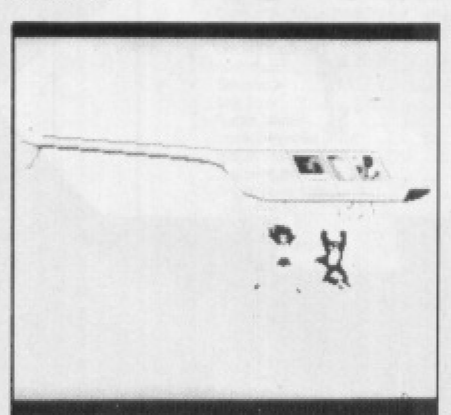
THROUGH THE DOOR at the top of the next corridor, Glames could hear a lot of activity. This must be the main control room for sure. He hurriedly set a diversion by turning the razor-tape recorder onto playback – plugging it into the wall socket first – and hiding it in the waste-paper basket next to the door. This should give him time to get to the control panel.



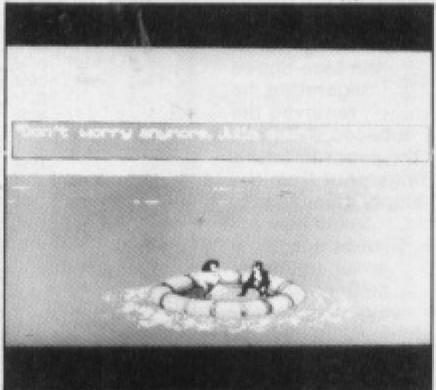
THE DOOR OPENED with a hiss, unveiling SPYDER's plan in full. Staring Glames in the face was a large computer screen showing the Stealth plane's position relative to Washington DC. Dr Why (the man behind SPYDER) revealed that Washington was just the first target, and unless his demands were met more countries would feel his wrath. While the evil megalomaniac was talking away, Glames noticed the CD player controls. The only thing standing in his way was Otto and a large gun. Now where was that distraction?



"SELF DESTRUCT in 30 seconds..." The tape recorder threw the room into panic. Nobody could tell from where the noise was coming and whether the message was real or not. In the confusion, Glames fired the red missile-cigarette at a nearby computer bank. The small explosion was all he needed as he threw himself at Otto, fists first. With Otto taken removed, Glames spun around just in time to see Julia disappearing down a tube with Dr Why. Glancing out of the window, Glames spotted a helicopter preparing for take off. Having attended to the CD player, he made his way towards the chopper.



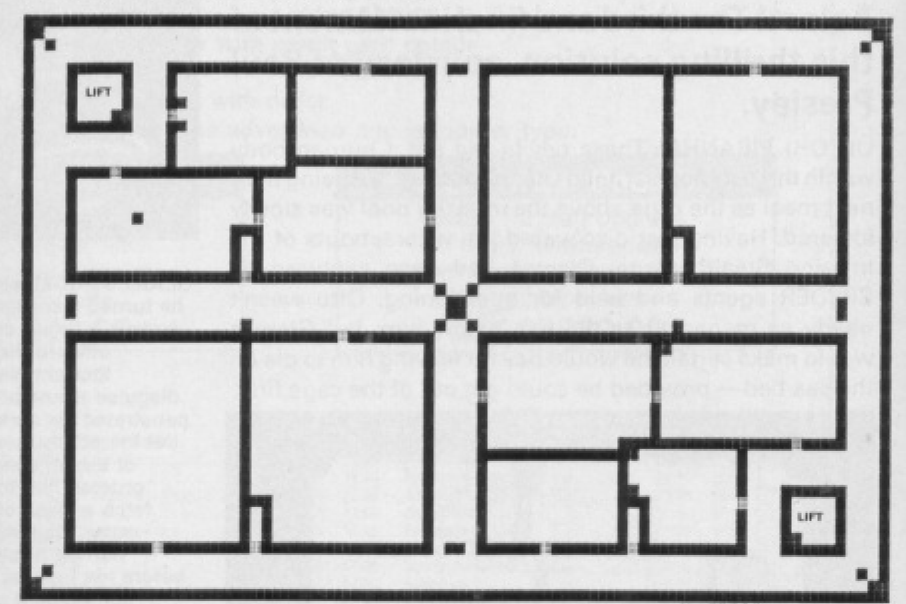
JULIA WAS thrown from the helicopter just as it lifted off the ground. She managed to grab onto the foot-rail and was surprised to see Glames hanging next to her. Even more surprising was the presence of a 20-pound bomb stuck to the undercarriage. She turned back to Glames and found him attaching a piece of elastic to the bomb release mechanism. "That should stop him causing any trouble," Glames said glibly, just as the two of them lost their grip. Throwing the rubber life boat below them, it inflated just in time for their landing.



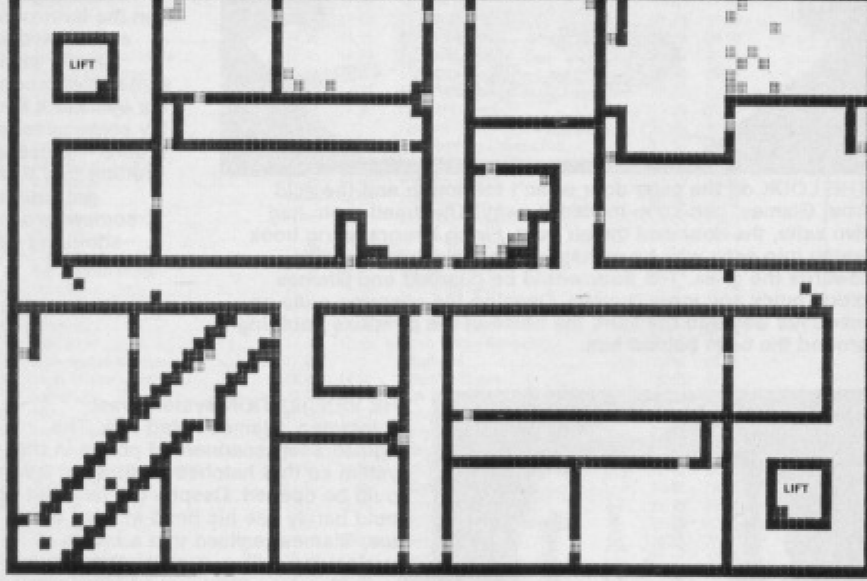
DR WHY glared at the couple through his window, then grinned as he figured he would have the last laugh and released the bomb. Glames and Julia's view of the exploding helicopter was magnificent but short-lived. It was going to be a long trip home again, but Glames was sure he'd find some way to pass the time as he grinned at Julia. It was four months before they managed to get the smile off her face.

Corporation

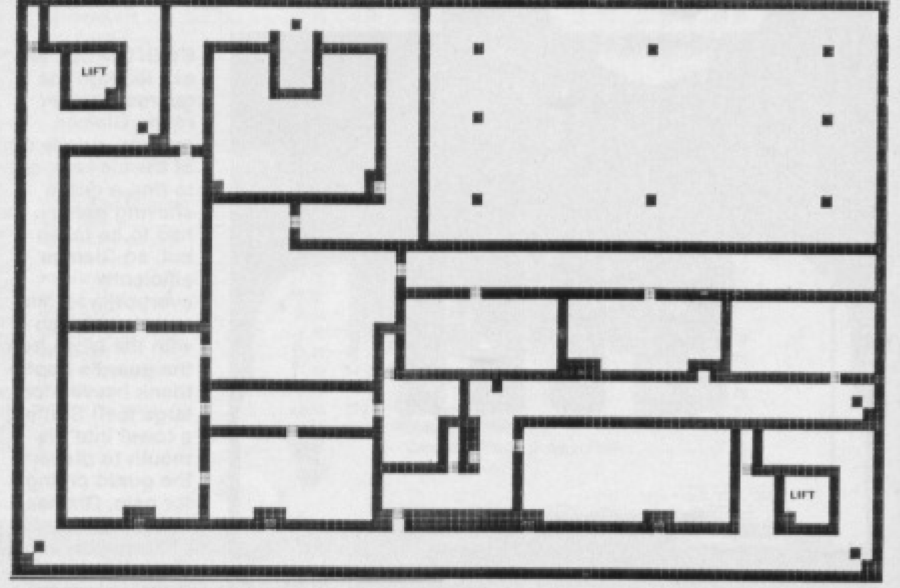
Following on from last month's set of expert tips from Kevin Bulmer, here's another three level maps to keep you going...



LEVEL ONE



LEVEL TWO

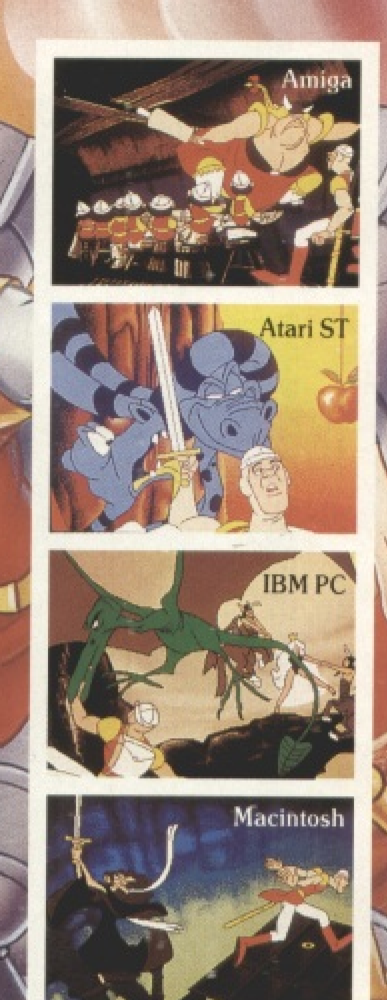


LEVEL THREE

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TIME WARP



Princess Daphne has been spirited away to a wrinkle in time by the evil wizard Mordroc who plans to force her into marriage. Only you, Dirk the Daring, can save her.

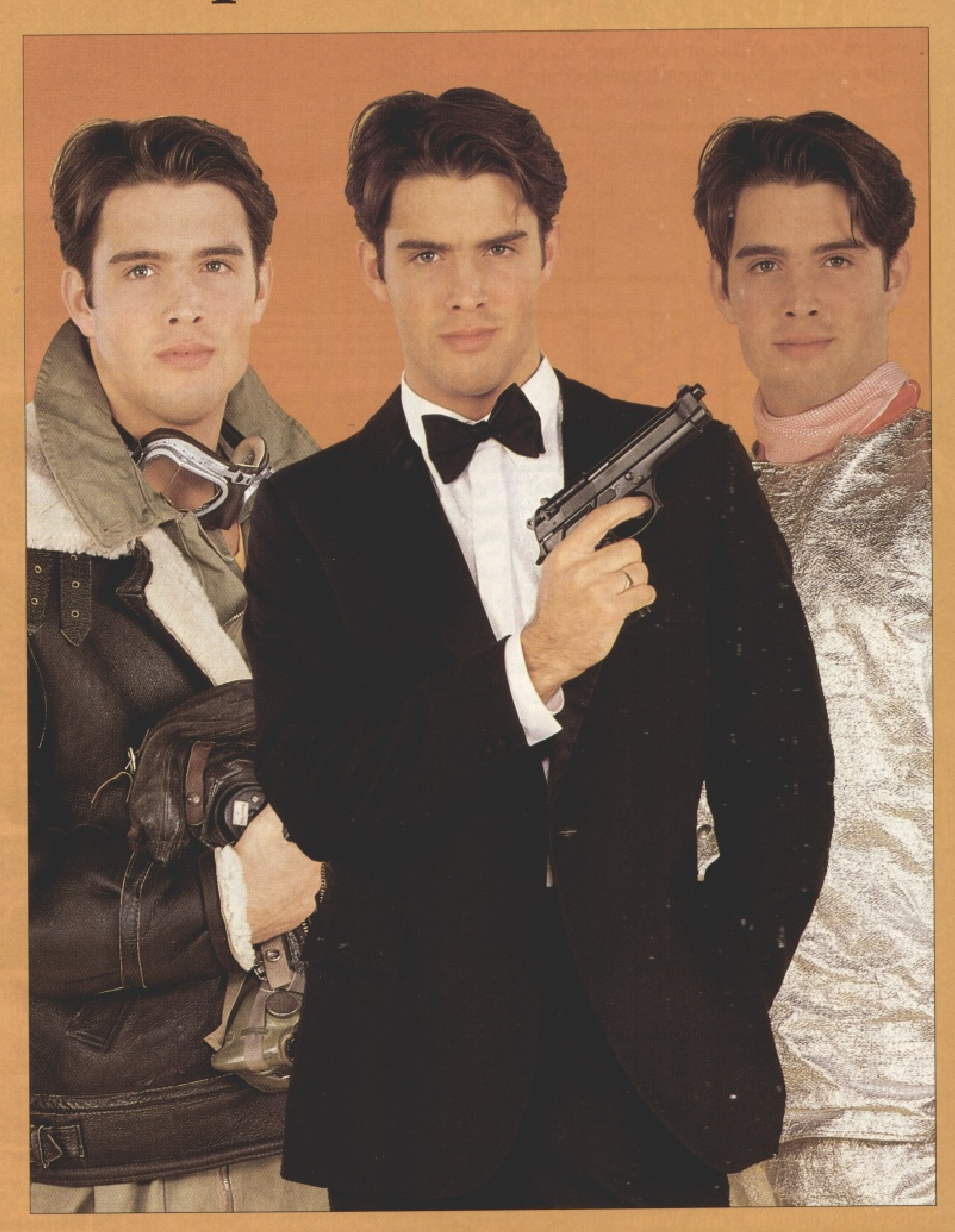
Transported by a bumbling old time machine, you begin the rescue mission. But you must hurry, for once the Casket of Doom has opened, Mordroc will place the Death Ring upon Daphne's finger in marriage and she will be lost forever in the Time Warp.

Be the first to play the all new Don Bluth animated adventure! Dragon's Lair II: Time Warp features full-screen animation and digitized sound with more scenes than any previous animated adventure.



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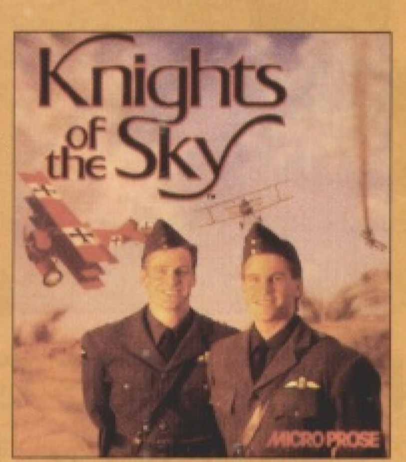
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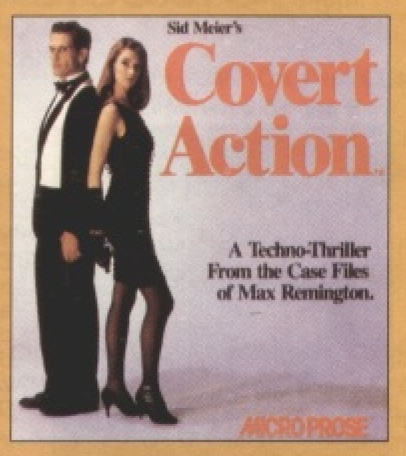
THE PAST

The date is 1914, and you are a British, American or French flying ace of World War I, attempting to take out Axis pilots in hair-raising dogfights and shoot down Zeppelins before they can cross the channel. "Knights of the Sky" is historically accurate, allowing you to use more sophisticated and powerful aircraft as you move towards 1918, navigating by map and compass, just like the real aerial combat pioneers of seventy five years ago. You can even end up challenging the the best hot-shot pilots that Germany could put into the air, such as Oswald Boelcke, Max Immelman, or even the great Baron von Richtofen, the Red Baron himself. "Knights of the Sky" features MicroProse's acclaimed 3D graphics system, further enhanced and improved, taking the flight sim genre into a whole new era. Available initially on IBM PC compatible machines, Atari ST and Commodore Amiga versions will follow shortly.



THE PRESENT

The 1990's are the age of international crime, terrorism and espionage - and you are the clandestine superspy charged with travelling the globe to combat these forces in MicroProse's new techno-thriller, "Covert Action". Using the latest electronic bugging techniques, high tech intelligence sources and good old fashioned clue hunting, its up to you to identify the ringleaders and bring them to justice. Become expert in wiretapping, decipher acquired information with the aid of sophisticated code-breaking programs, and use surveillance to complete the picture. And if your technological know-how, cunning and luck ever let you down, you've always got the latest combat weapons such as CS gas, stun grenades and compact sub-machine guns to help you out. Across Europe, the Middle East and Central America, with 16 cities to cover in each area, you'll have your work cut out to make sense of the allegiances between numerous terrorist groups, known political activists and foreign spies, all undertaking "Covert Action". Available for IBM PC compatible computers.



THE FUTURE

The end of the 21st century. The Earth is an ecological wasteland. Nuclear meltdowns, climate alteration, species extinction; all have taken their toll. Humanity must evacuate its mother world, to give the Earth time to recover from the devastation wrought by past civilisations. The human species has left Earth in immense transport ships. You are the pilot of a Trailblazer series dreadnought, sent ahead of the main ships to prepare an alien star cluster for human colonization. You must find a planet suitable for humanity and obtain the resources the fledgling colony needs to survive, by mining them from unclaimed worlds or through interplanetary commerce with friendly aliens. You must make the cluster as safe as possible for human families by making friends and eliminating enemies. Flying at incredible speeds through deep space, the many lifeforms you encounter will see you, quite correctly, as the alien. "Lightspeed" is MicroProse's first space simulation and it is one which will set new standards by which others will be judged. Original music scores and the latest in 3D light sourced graphics provide the stunning technical backdrop for your journey as you fight, trade, and talk your way towards your goal of finding a new planet for your people. "Lightspeed" will initially be available for IBM PC compatible computers.

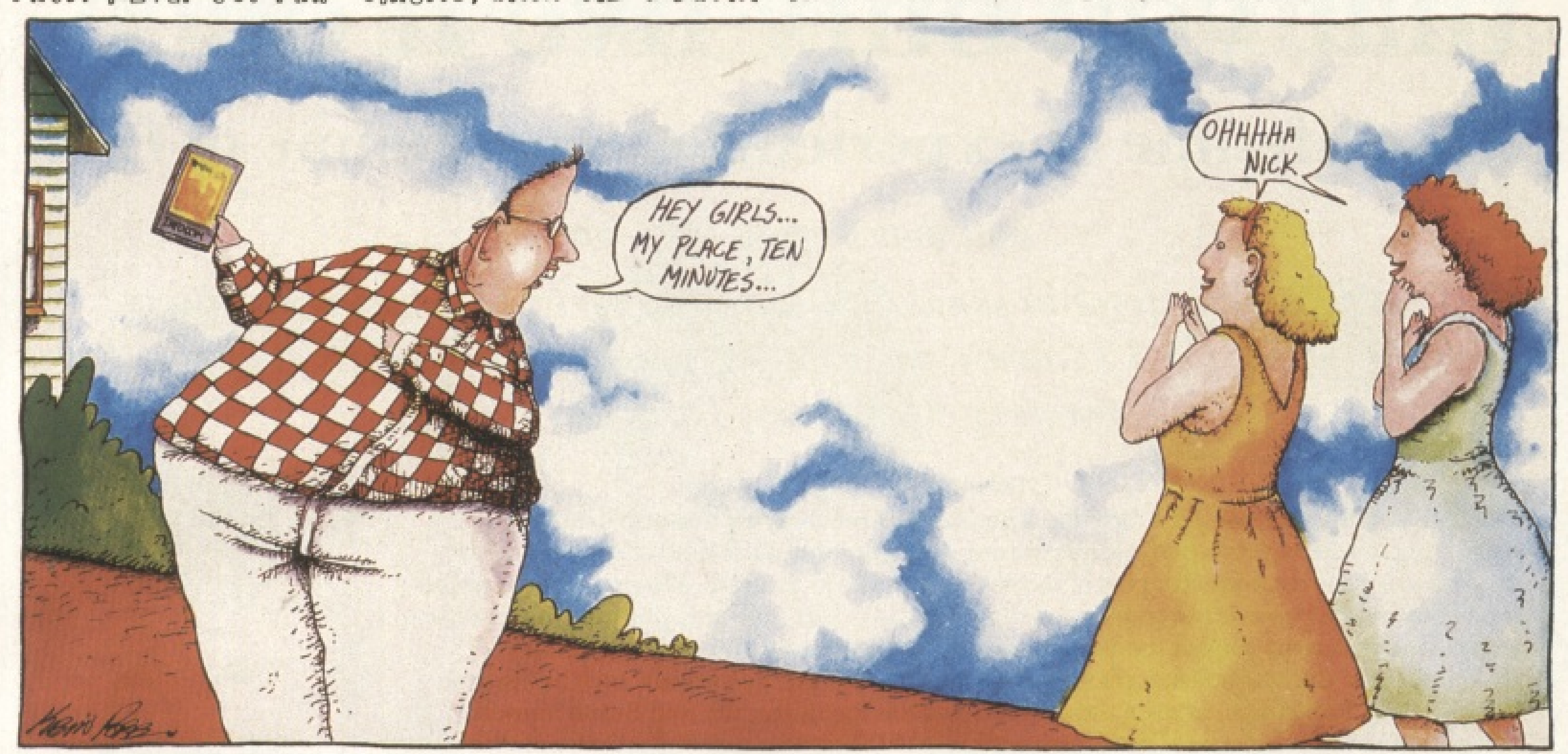


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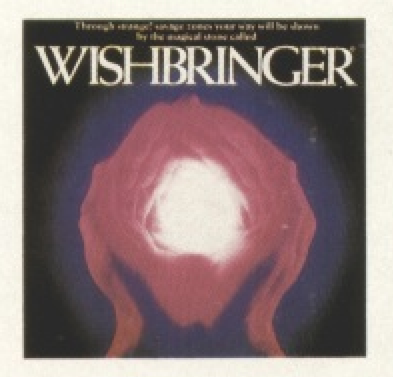
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This phenomenally popular story plunges you into the extraordinary environs of the Great Underground Empire in search of incomparable treasures. You'll come face to face with outlandish creatures as you make an amazing odyssey with so many twists it can offer new surprises every time you explore it.



PLANETFALL -
In this sci-fi comedy, you're a stellar Patrol Ensign 7th class - as low as you can go. Then your luck takes a turn for the better. Your patrol ship explodes. True, the mysterious, deserted world to which you're jettisoned is plagued by floods, pestilence and a mutant Wild Kingdom, but you'll have Floyd, a mischievous robot, to help you find the secret to saving it.



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Cadaver

Here's part two of our four-part series in which Bitmap Brother Phillip J Wilcock talks adventurous dwarves through this top-notch fantasy adventure.

"LEVEL TWO is set on the ground floor of Castle Wulf, a place previously inhabited by Carolus and his six captains: Axel, Brokson, Grimbold, Ragnar, Helm, and Magnus. Here they discussed policies, rule of the castle and magic.

"On entering Level Two you will have lost all objects from your rucksack that are NOT Spells or Potions (the idea of this is to free space in your rucksack).

"The aim here is to find, collect and return six transport stones created by Carolus for his captains, an urn that must contain the ashes of one of the captains, and an emerald to enable entry to the final room...

"Things are not, of course, that easy!"

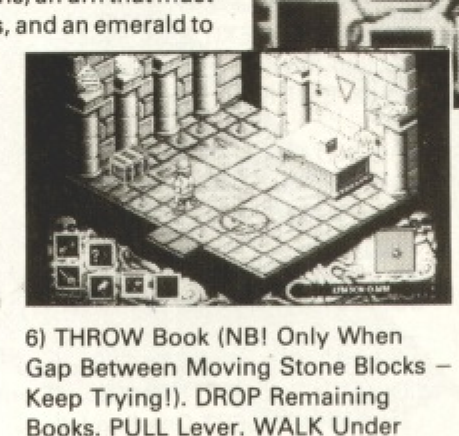
1) EXIT North.

2) OPEN Chest. COLLECT Shield Shot Potion. JUMP Onto Altar. OPEN Strong Box (NB! Beware Flames! Use Fire Shield Potion From Level One). COLLECT Shuriken, Wand (Massacre). EXIT North.

3) USE Shot Shield Potion. OR... SHOOT Shuriken. OR... USE Magic Missile Spell (To Kill 'Pump Creatures'). COLLECT Potion (Stamina). EXIT East, South.

4) PULL Lever (When Both Lights Black). OPEN Chest. COLLECT Shuriken. READ Books. COLLECT Two or Three Books. EXIT North.

5) COLLECT Ashes. SEARCH Altar. COLLECT Urn, Scroll. JUMP UP (To Touch Ram's Skull). DROP Urn. INSERT Ashes (Into Urn). COLLECT Urn. EXIT North.



6) THROW Book (NB! Only When Gap Between Moving Stone Blocks – Keep Trying!). DROP Remaining Books. PULL Lever. WALK Under Stone Blocks (DON'T Touch Them!). EXIT East.

7) PULL Lever. WAIT Until Block At Full Height. EXIT West, South, West, North.

8) OPEN Casket, Strong Box. INSERT Mind Blast Spell (Power Zero) Into Casket. COLLECT Casket. INSERT Casket (Into Strong Box). OPEN Strong Box, Casket. COLLECT Mind Blast Spell (Recharged). JUMP UP (To Hit Two Skulls). EXIT South. COLLECT Teleport Stone. EXIT South.

9) COLLECT Coin (QUICKLY! While Avoiding Slime). EXIT North. USE Cure Poison Potion (From Level One) if Slime Touches You. PRESS Lever (Left, Right, Middle, Left). PRESS Button. EXIT West, South. HOLD Recharged Mind Blast Spell. EXIT West (Middle Exit).

10) FIRE Mind Blast Spell. EXIT West

11) DRINK Shot Shield Potion. COLLECT Coin, Wand (Spell Spell). EXIT West.

12) PRESS Button. SEARCH Chair. PULL Switch. PRESS New Button. READ Book. EXIT West.

13) PULL Lever. EXIT East, North (Up Stairs), South. COLLECT Key. FALL Down to Chest. OPEN Chest. COLLECT Gold, Teleport Stone. EXIT South, South, South.

14) EXIT East (Top Exit – QUICKLY!). COLLECT Cleaver. DRINK Barrel. EXIT West, East (Bottom Exit). COLLECT Flask (Cure Poison). EXIT West, South, South.

15) JUMP ON Pan (QUICKLY! Otherwise Go Via Bed). WAIT Until It Rises. OPEN Floating Chest. COLLECT Key. EXIT North, East.

16) HOLD Sleep Spell. FIRE Sleep Spell. EXIT South.

17) JUMP Onto Strongbox (Touch Trophy). PULL Switch. OPEN Strongbox. COLLECT Gold. EXIT West. PRESS Button. OPEN Chest. COLLECT Two Bottles, Teleporter.

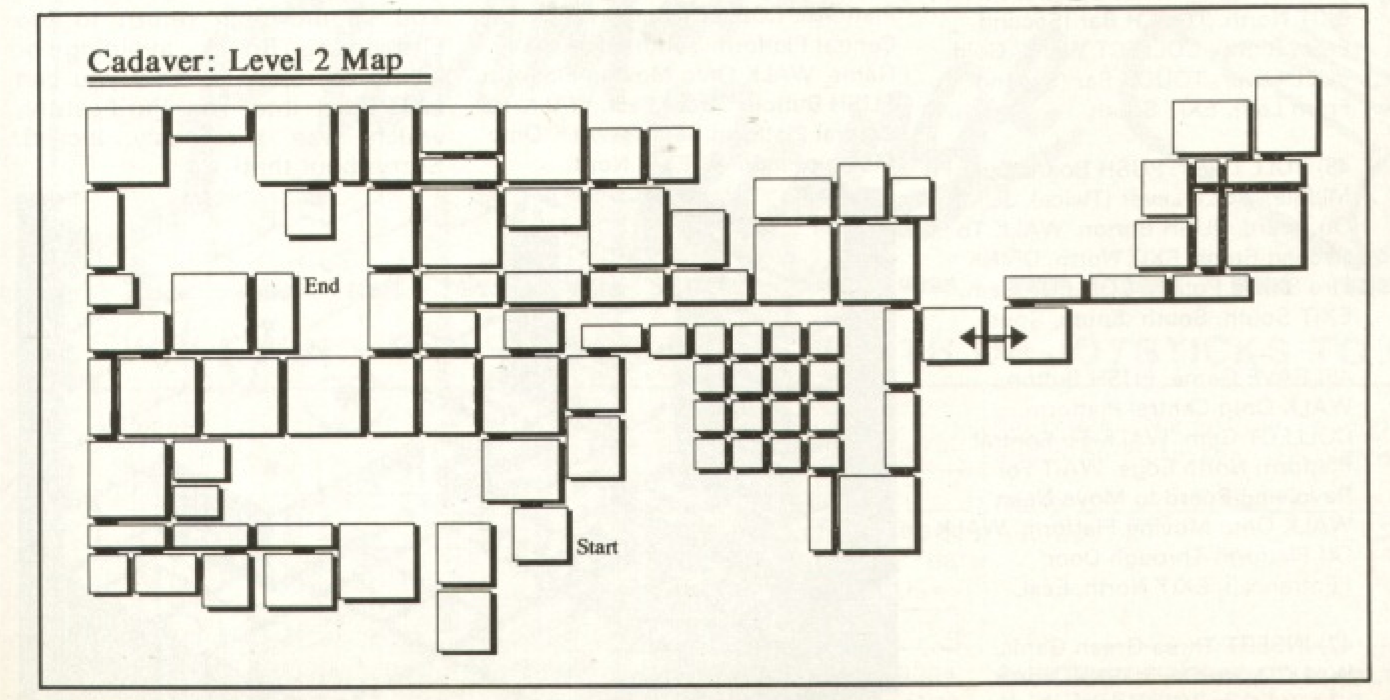
18) WALK UP Steps. PUSH All 10 Bottles Off Platform Onto Floor. COLLECT Key. EXIT North. INSERT Key Into Keyhole. EXIT East.

19) WALK SLOWLY Under Wooden Platform. COLLECT Key. WALK Onto Platform. PULL Chain. ENTER Pit.

20) PULL Level. ENTER Pit. COLLECT Two Keys (QUICKLY!). PULL Level. WALK To Chain. TOUCH Chain.

21) TOUCH Chain. EXIT West, West, West. THROW Cleaver at Tortoise. SEARCH Tortoise. OPEN Tortoise. COLLECT Cleaver. INSERT Tortoise Shell Key Into Keyhole. EXIT North, North, East, North. WALK UP Stairs. EXIT North, North.

22) INSERT Second Gold Key. DRINK Superfast Potion.



23) OPEN Chest. COLLECT Transporter. WALK UP Stairs. EXIT South, South, South (Down Stairs), South, East. ENTER Room Four Times (Ignore Bags First Two Times). COLLECT Bag Of Gold on Second Two Occasions. EXIT East, East, North, North.

24) FIRE Sleep Spell. EXIT North. COLLECT Final Token. WALK To WULF Slot. INSERT Four Tokens. EXIT West.

25) PULL Lever. WAIT Until Platform Reaches Top. EXIT West.

26) WALK Under Slime Platform. WALK West (Slime Follows, Pushes Chest Off Platform). FIRE Dispel Trap Spell on Chest (From Level One). OPEN Chest. COLLECT Coins.

27) EXIT West. KILL Tortoise with Cleaver. OPEN Tortoise. COLLECT Key. EXIT West.

28) EXIT South. PULL Lever. COLLECT Coin, Shuriken. COLLECT Suicide Potion. THROW Potion at Mouth OR... COLLECT Meat. WAIT Until Creature Enters Room. DROP Meat. PUSH Meat Through Bars.

29) WALK Up Stairs. EXIT East. COLLECT Potion, Spell. EXIT East. PULL Lever. EXIT West. FALL To Ground. EXIT East, East.

30) PULL Lever. PUSH Board Over Pit. WALK Onto Board. PULL Lever. EXIT North (High Exit). COLLECT Key. EXIT East.

31) FIRE Sleep Spell. COLLECT Gems. WALK Up Stairs. EXIT West, South, South, East.

32) COLLECT Spherical Gem, Spell. FIRE Spell (To Open Two Chests). EXIT West. FALL Down.

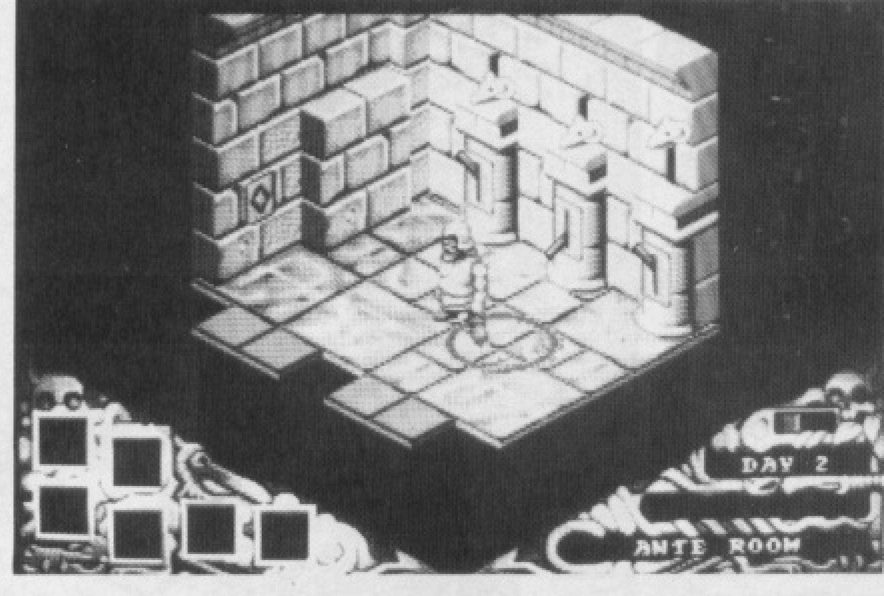
33) WALK Near to Pillar. DRINK Strength Potion. PULL Pillar to Shelf. PUSH Pillar Onto Shelf. COLLECT Key. EXIT West, South.

34) INSERT Three Green Gems Into Hole. DROP Urn, Four Teleporters, Two Green Alcohol Bottles. EXIT East.

35) WALK Until One Tile Away From Moving Spikes. JUMP Over Moving Spikes. EXIT East.

36) HOLD Key. THROW Key Between Bars. TOUCH Bars. COLLECT Key. EXIT East.

37) KILL Slime (Use Massacre or Shurikens). EXIT North, East.



38) COLLECT Spike. OPEN Chest. COLLECT Cash. PULL Rack Away From Wall. COLLECT Key. INSERT Key Into Keyhole. PULL Chain. EXIT West.

39) OPEN Chest. COLLECT Gauntlet. PRESS Button. OPEN Hole. INSERT Spike Into Hole. EXIT South.

40) JUMP Up (Touch Brown Wall Hanging). PUSH Bucket (Stand On It). PRESS Button. OPEN Revealed Chest. COLLECT Meat, Gold. EXIT East.

41) COLLECT Meat. GIVE Two Meat to Mouth On Wall. COLLECT Two Bottles. EXIT South, West. COLLECT Transporter. INSERT Key Into Keyhole. EXIT East.

42) PULL Lever. PUSH Gem Away (Use Another Object). COLLECT Gem. EXIT North.

43) COLLECT Poison Potion. THROW Poison Potion at Mouth. COLLECT Gold. EXIT South.

44) EXIT East. WALK Up First Stairs. EXIT North. TOUCH Bar (Second From Right). COLLECT Wand, Gold. PULL Lever. TOUCH Bar (Second From Left). EXIT South.

45) PULL Lever. PUSH Board Over Pit Middle). PULL Lever (Twice). JUMP On Board. PUSH Button. WALK To Second Steps. EXIT North. DRINK Fire Shield Potion. COLLECT Gem. EXIT South, South, South, South.

46) SAVE Game. PUSH Button. WALK Onto Central Platform. COLLECT Gem. WALK To Central Platform North Edge. WAIT For Revolving Board to Move Near. WALK Onto Moving Platform. WALK Off Platform Through Door ('Entrance'). EXIT North, East.

47) INSERT Three Green Gems. WALK Down Stairs. EXIT North.

48) PUSH Button. EXIT West. COLLECT Key. EXIT East. INSERT Key Into Keyhole. EXIT East (Up Stairs). EXIT North, West.

49) HOLD Gauntlet. OPEN Strongbox. COLLECT Cash, Shuriken. DROP Gauntlet. EXIT East, North, West.

50) COLLECT Gold. OPEN Strongbox. COLLECT Three bags. EXIT East.

51) DROP Three Bags. PULL Lever. COLLECT Gold. EXIT East OR... (From Last Room) INSERT One Bag Into Small Lead-Lined Casket (And Again Until Gone). EXIT East, East (Repeat Three Times).

52) DRINK Shot Shield Potion. EXIT South (Second Door). COLLECT Key. EXIT North. INSERT Key Into Keyhole. EXIT North (Second Door).

53) OPEN Chest. COLLECT Two Keys. GIVE Three Bags to Mouth. OR... Keep Them! TOUCH West Skull. PUSH Skull. HOLD East Teleporter.

54) EXIT West, South, South. WALK Off Moving Platform Onto Central Platform. COLLECT Spell. WALK To Central Platform South Edge. SAVE Game. WALK Onto Moving Platform. PUSH Button. JUMP East. WALK To Central Platform South. WALK Onto Moving Platform. EXIT North.

55) WALK Through Maze To Top Left (North West) Room. FIRE Unlock Spell (To Open Doors). PULL Lever. COLLECT Gold. UNLOCK Door. WALK Through Door. COLLECT Emerald.

NB! IF YOU WANT TO GO BACK THROUGH THE MAZE GO TO 59!

56) EXIT West, South, West, West, North, West. COLLECT Urn, Four Teleporters. EXIT South, West, West, West, North. DRINK Remaining Stamina Potions. EXIT East.

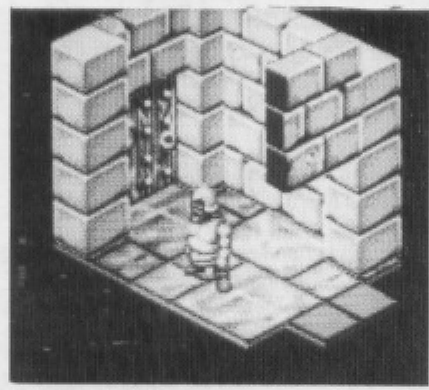
57) DROP Urn On Block, Emerald On Block, Six Teleporters In Hole. EXIT East.

58) PULL Lever. WALK Into Blood Circle. WAIT...

YOU ARE NOW ON LEVEL THREE!

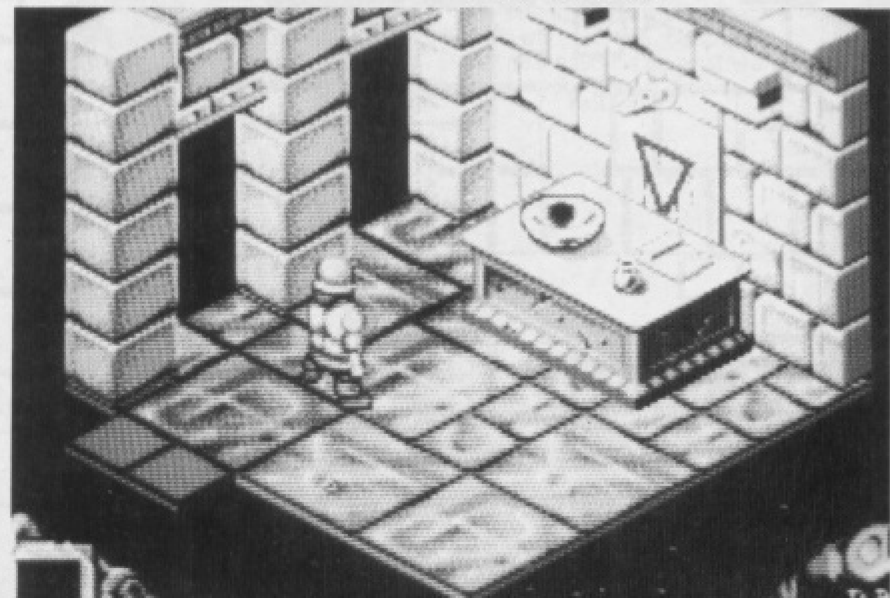
59) EXIT North, East, North, North, West. PULL Lever. DRINK Stamina. EXIT North, North, North, North, East, East, East, East. PULL Lever.

(Go To 56)



OOPS!

IF YOU HAVE been working through the solution to Level One in our previous issue you may have come across a slight problem when you reach Clue 31. It is in fact necessary to 'INSERT Key Covered With Spiders Web Into Keyhole'. You should then return to the Embalming Room, avoiding or killing the spiders. Now you can EXIT East into The Purificatory, which was previously locked. Sorry 'bout that!



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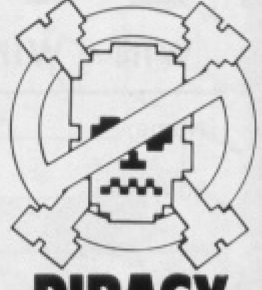
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Gordon Houghton gets to grips with more aliens than there are letters in the alphabet.

Z-Out



X-OUT? A PIECE OF CAKE. Anyone could have annihilated Alpha Centauri's satellite. It was hardly worth bothering with victory celebrations, but success is success.

The population of Alpha Centauri itself however, chose to see your actions in a different light. Long range scanners have revealed intense activity on the surface of their home planet, and it looks like an attack is imminent. Federation HQ recommends a first strike. And guess which swell-head has been chosen as pilot?

Z-Out is a six-level horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up in which your mission is to destroy Alpha Centauri. It follows a standard formula: each level features its own unique landscape and aliens, and each is guarded by a mother alien, with a sprinkling of huge aliens throughout. Your craft can be bolstered with progressive weaponry and shields, and extra lives and secret bonuses are available to pilots skilled enough to find them.

ALIENS AND SPINNING balls go together like Gazza and bawls. This is the middle-of-level alien from Level One: it spins a bit, separates (still spinning), wanders about (spinning), joins together (spinning), and then does a bit of spinning. It only stops spinning when you kill it.



THE PHILOSOPHY behind Z-Out is simple enough: you won't get anywhere without weaponry. At the start you have nothing but a peashooter which bruises ass rather than fries it. Progressive weapon icons are usually carried by ridiculous orange blob-things with silly grins: turn them into orange squash, pick up the icon, and you are laughing. Carry on laughing and you are dead – enemies come from anywhere, and mostly take more than a single shot to kill.

THE A TO Z-OUT OF WEAPONRY

ALMOST ALL WEAPONS in Z-Out have a couple of strengths. The first time you collect an icon, it rewards you with a Drone. The second and third time enhance the weapon's strength. The full complement is available in single-player mode only. In team mode there are two weapons, each with three strengths: a triple shot, and a streaker.



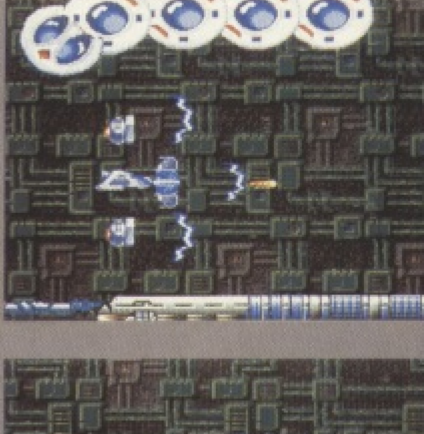
DRONE
Heavily influenced by R-Type's The Force, this Drone can be mounted at the front or back, and is important for two reasons: it acts as an impenetrable shield and (when you have full power) can actually absorb opponents' energy. Tasty.

BEAM
Again, based on the R-Type beam: hold down the fire button, listen for the signal – and let rip.



SATELLITES
Up to two can be collected. If you are dextrous enough, you can place them anywhere around the ship using the cursor keys.

BOUNCING FLAMES
Flames that shoot diagonally from the ship and bounce off walls until they hit aliens. Basically two-directional, enhanced to four-directional with maximum power-up.



FLAME THROWER
Yer basic electrical waves of death. With a couple of satellites you get three of them. They look spectacular, but the firing rate isn't tops and can leave you in a pickle.

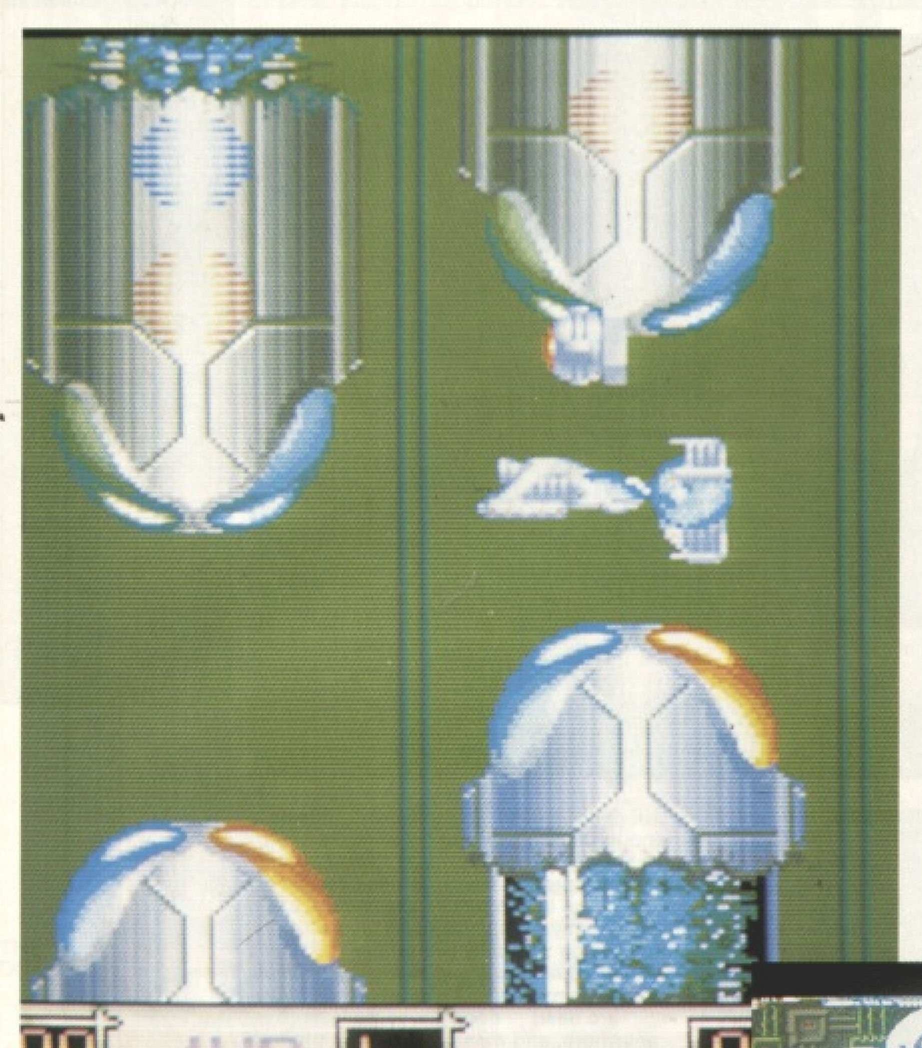


MULTIPLE SHOT
A forward shot enhancer. The first power-up gives you double-shot, the second triple-shot. Useful for hot pilots who want to practice pin-point firing, or for masochists who like to play hard.



FUSION BOMB
The simple version releases a bomb which explodes into a five-way shot after a short time. The advanced version releases a pair of spinning energy beams.





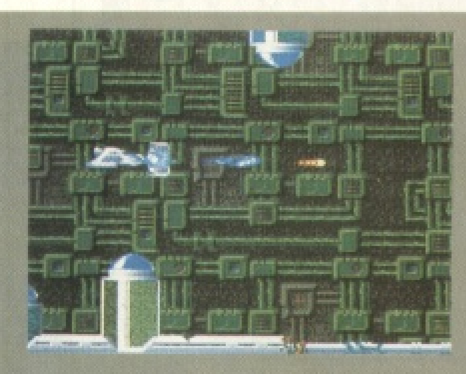
LANDSCAPE IN Z-Out is no-one's idea of accommodating. Take these huge piston-like objects for example – all they do is move up and down. Easy? It is until you reach the pair of giant pincers at the end. Fly through too soon and you get crushed. Fly through too late and the alien emplacements give you a fireball sandwich.

A RAINBOW ARTS seems to be able to produce quality shoot 'em ups as a matter of course. X-Out, **Turrican** and now Z-Out all feature smart visuals, excellent music and sound effects, and intelligently conceived variations on shoot 'em up cliches. Take the Outriders, for example – normally they just sit above and below your ship. In Z-Out you can place them just about anywhere to suit the situation. There isn't much of a scenario, and it doesn't really need one: it's an unpretentious blaster with few in-game presentation frills (a highscore table and a two simultaneous players option). This is only to its benefit however, since loading is so much quicker, and you can play without having to suffer interminable death and start sequences. Gameplay has been well thought out: apart from a range of genuinely useful weapons, secret bonuses and extra lives, there are a host of horribly devious alien formations, which don't simply wander on screen asking to be hit – this could make it a mite tough for first timers. Even so, when you add the fabulous backdrops (taking in influences from **R-Type** and **Alien** on the way) and punchy soundtracks, you get another blaster which will prove irresistible to shoot 'em up fans.

ST OUT AT THE same time for the same price, ST Z-Out will only suffer marginally in the colour and sound departments. Gameplay should remain the same.

PC BAD NEWS, folks. There will be no Z-Out on the PC, not now, not never.

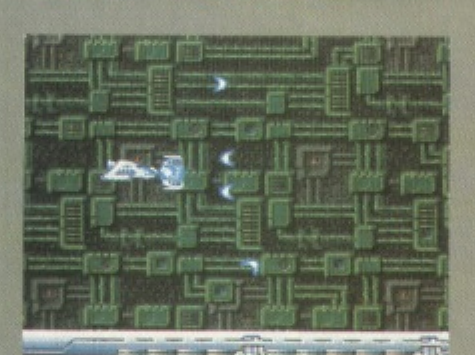
THIS PALLID SNAKE is the ultimate barrier between you and Level Two. It likes surprises: just when you think it's following a simple set pattern, it changes its mind, doubles back on itself and corners you. After many a frustrating death, you begin to realise that the snake itself isn't really the problem – take a look at that teensy alien emplacement at the top right of the screen.



STREAKER
A handy little laser flash which follows the movement of the ship after firing. On its second level, the satellites can also throw the flashes.



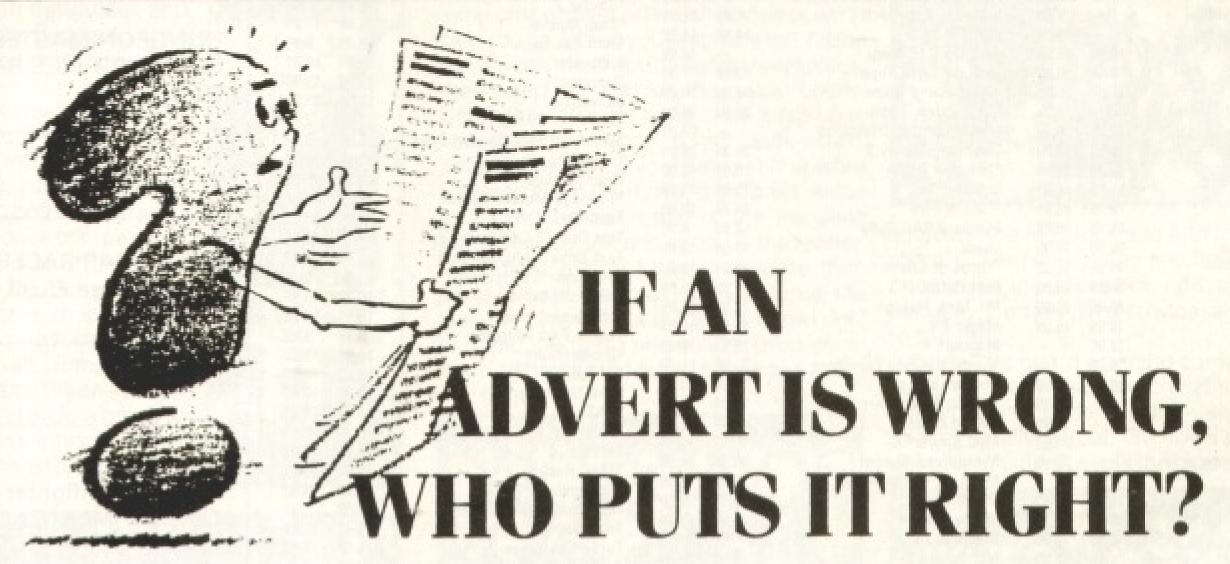
SATELLITE ROTATION
Once you collect this system, all other systems are deactivated until you collect another weapon. It's a sophisticated shield which produces spinning balls around your craft.



CREEP BOMBS
Bombs of fire which seek out and destroy aliens in their path. Particularly useful for those sneaky aliens cowering behind obstacles in the landscape.



JUST TO SHOW that they have an exponential sense of humour, Z-Out's programmers made Level Two twice as hard as Level One. More aliens emerging from all directions, alien emplacements with homing flames, near-invincible mother aliens, and landscapes designed to cause maximum difficulty. And only another four levels to face! Ho ho ho!

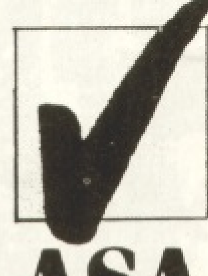


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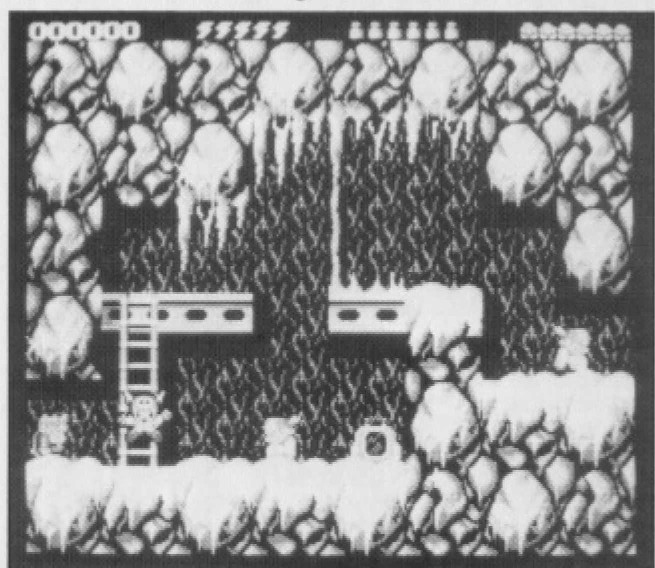
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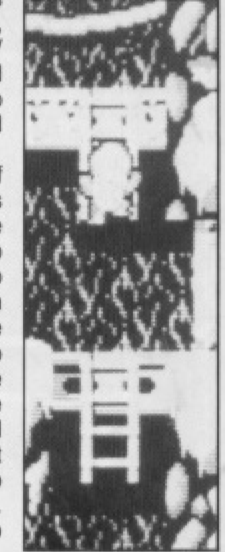
Rick Dangerous II

Even the most dangerous people need a little help now and again. So here's the second part of our complete solution...

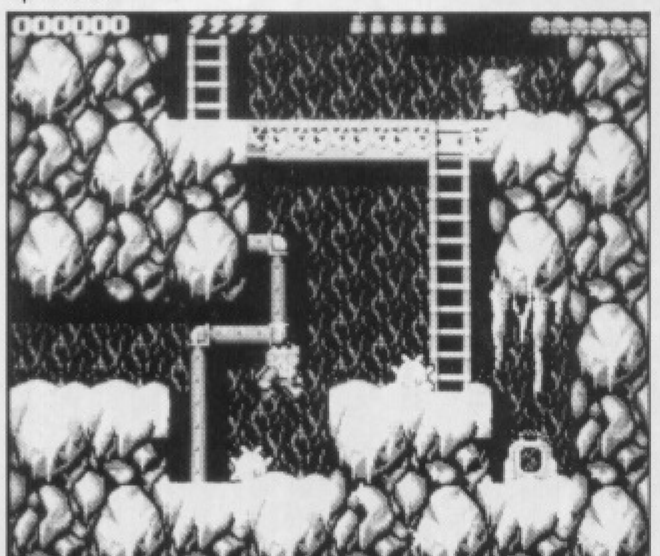
RICK SEIZES the controls of the strange alien spaceship and takes off, heading for the mysterious planet Barf and the Fat Guy's headquarters. However, the Fat Guy was never particularly generous with fuel, forcing Rick to crash land over the desolate Ice Kingdom Of Freezia.

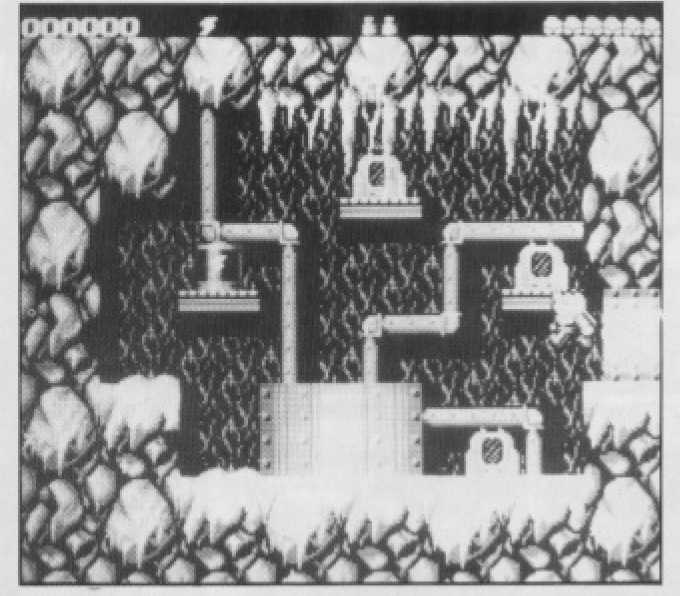


START BY SHOOTING the two guards that approach you. Now walk to the right, avoiding the falling icicle, to collect the TV bonus. Walk back, climb the ladder and jump right to the other side. Slide a bomb to kill the guard below, then drop down and exit.



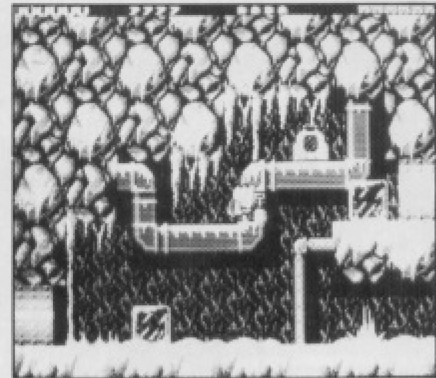
Time your two jumps to avoid the pair of rotating cogs, then collect the TV bonus and climb the ladder to the top, killing the patrol guard when you get there. Climb up the next ladder, but stop before you get to the top. When the clockwork penguin thaws out, wait for him to drop off the ledge before moving up to the top. Jump over to the right-hand platform and shoot the guard there. Punch the switch set into the wall to trigger the hover-lift. Jump on and let it take you up to the top. When you get there shoot the guard and slide a bomb to the left to dispose of the pointy icicle trap. Drop off the lift, walk to the far left and jump up twice.





Duck and crawl forward to avoid the snowball-throwing machine. Climb the ladder and jump (twice) over to the far left. Exit through the metal tube to the Bonus Room and collect everything. Come back out, jump up and right three times and shoot the guard at the top. Jump right again, punch the wall-switch and walk left under the snow showers, avoiding the falling frost.

Climb the left-hand ladder and 'slide-bomb' the first icicle trap. Walk forward and QUICKLY do the same with the second. An ice block appears from the chute on the left, so you must move fast. Run right and jump on the hover-lift which comes down to pick you up. When you reach the top, hit the wall switch to retract the set of steel spikes, then jump left and kill the guard below. Climb the left-hand ladder and jump up to collect the dynamite. Climb back down, jump right and time your next set of upward jumps to avoid the rolling snowballs. At the top, jump between two of the trundling penguins, run left and climb up the ladder. Jump right, avoiding the falling icicle, then jump left onto the next ledge. Punch the wall-switch and take the lift up. Crawl right to avoid the flying snowballs. Drop down once, dynamite the guard below and exit to the right.

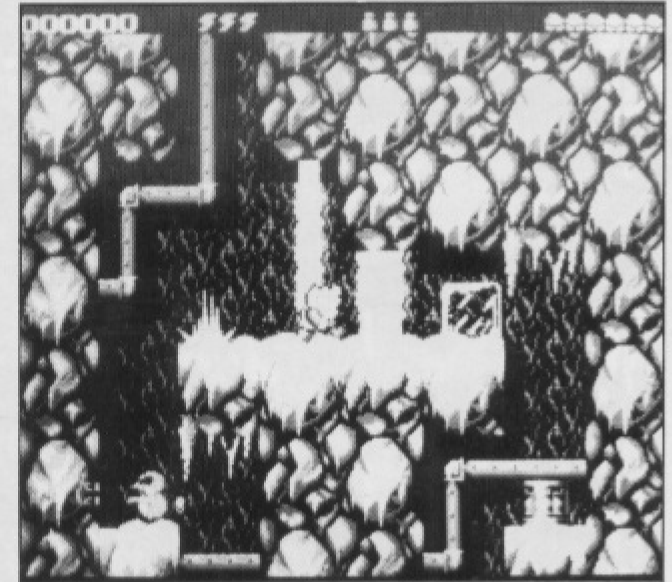


Jump up and climb the steel pipes over to the right-hand side of the screen. Collect the TV bonus. Drop a bomb to dispose of the icicle trap below, then fall down, avoiding the ice blocks and exit right.

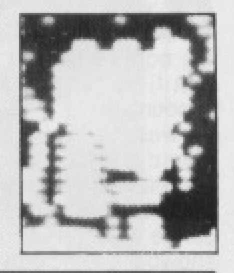
Hit the wall switch to activate the hover-lift, then ride it to the top and jump over the rotating cog. Jump right again to collect the dynamite, then hit the switch to dispose of the ice block. Drop down the gap you just made and crawl right, then left to avoid the two snowball machines. At the bottom, slide a bomb into the narrow crawl-way to destroy the icicle trap, then crawl through and drop right. Dynamite the second set of icicles, drop down and slide-bomb the frozen penguin, then shoot him as soon as he thaws out. Walk left, drop down and hit the wall-switch to retract the steel spikes. Use the two small ladders to get to the other side of the acid vat. Crawl under the cog to exit.

Keep crawling to avoid the second cog, then drop right to collect the TV bonus. Drop down, slide-bomb the ice block and QUICKLY jump over it when it slides towards you. Drop right to collect the dynamite, then down again for the TV bonus. Hit the wall-switch to retract the spikes, then walk left and drop down. Jump over the first frozen penguin, then quickly run right and climb down the ladder.

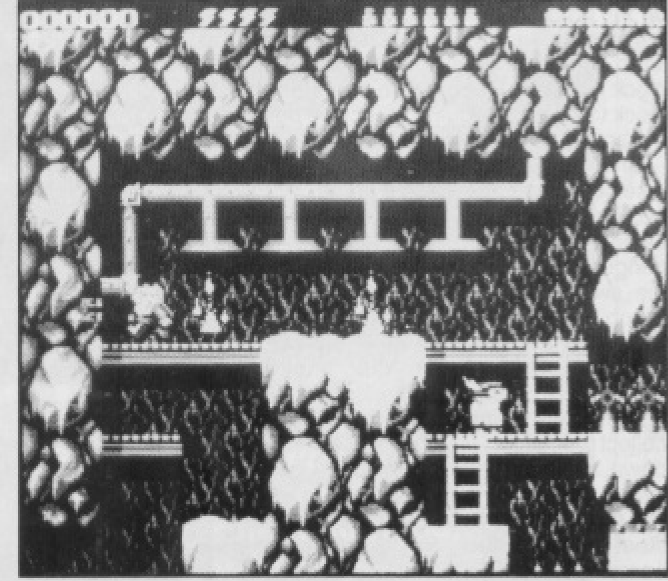
Dynamite the ice block, drop right down, and let the falling icicle kill the guard as he approaches. Climb up the pipe and collect the hidden 500 bonus. Climb right, down the pipe to the bottom, blast the guard and jump across to the right. Jump up again and crawl far right, avoiding the ceiling cog, and hit the wall-switch to retract the spikes below. Drop down the left-hand side, jump



left, over the ice block and into the secret room. Collect everything and leave. Jump once over the ice block and shoot the penguin, then jump right (twice) again. Exit to the right.



Shoot the guard when he comes down. Jump up, hit the wall-switch to the left and time your walk under the snow showers to avoid the falling frost. Go down the short right-hand ladder, avoid the guard and exit

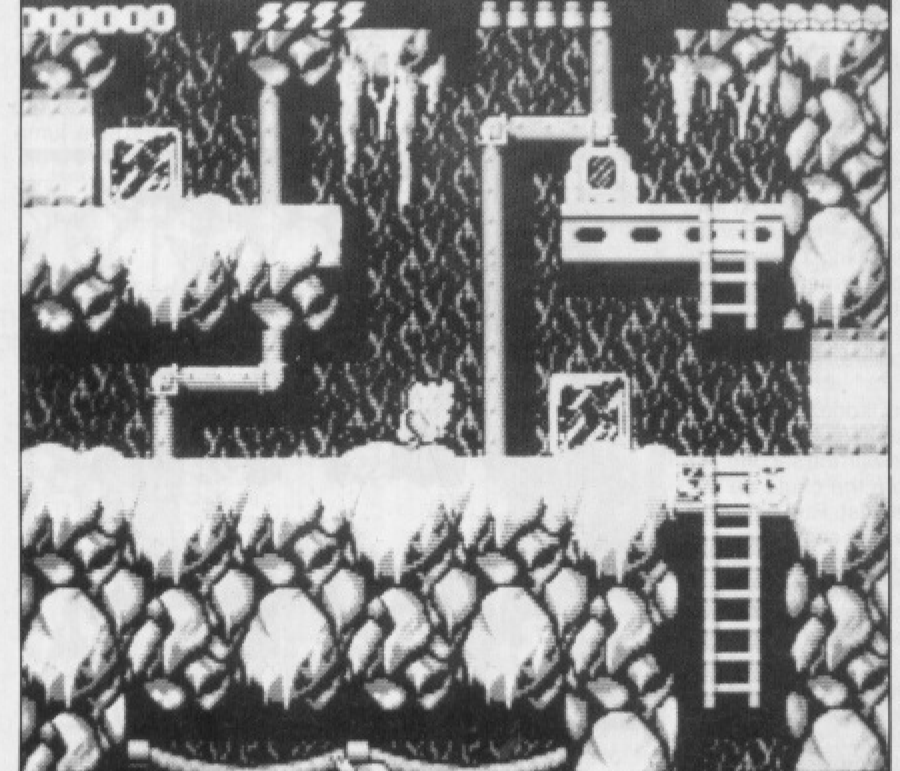


right – into the Hoverbike section.

Fly up, avoiding the snowball machine, then go right, QUICKLY, to avoid the spike traps. Fly up and kill both guards. Shoot the wall-switch and go up. Collect the ammunition. Go up (avoiding the snowball machine) and shoot the penguin. Zig-zag your way up to the dual snow showers, shoot the switch on the left and exit to the right to leave the Hoverbike.

Shoot the guard as he comes down, then go up the ladder, collecting the ammunition along the way. Slide a bomb across to the block of ice, and drop down out of harm's way for when it slides left. Climb back up, shoot the guards, then climb down the right-hand ladder and exit.

Run right and jump on the ladder to avoid the sliding blocks of ice. Collect the TV bonus. Time your drop and climb down the tall ladder. Drop off onto the ice below, leave a bomb and quickly jump back onto the ladder to avoid the explosion. When

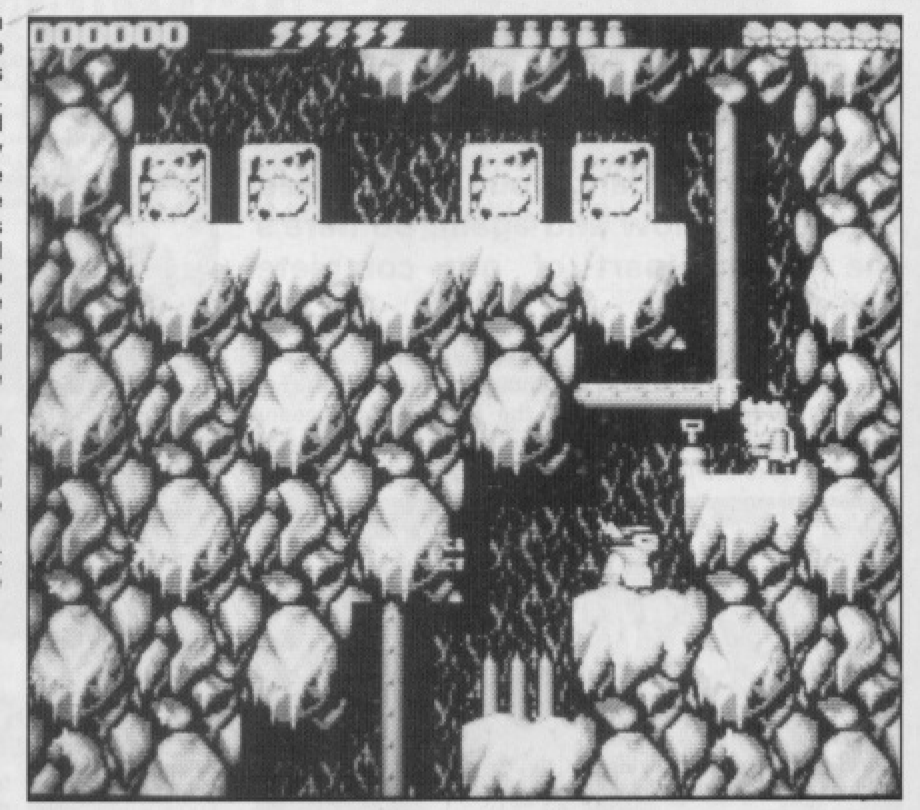


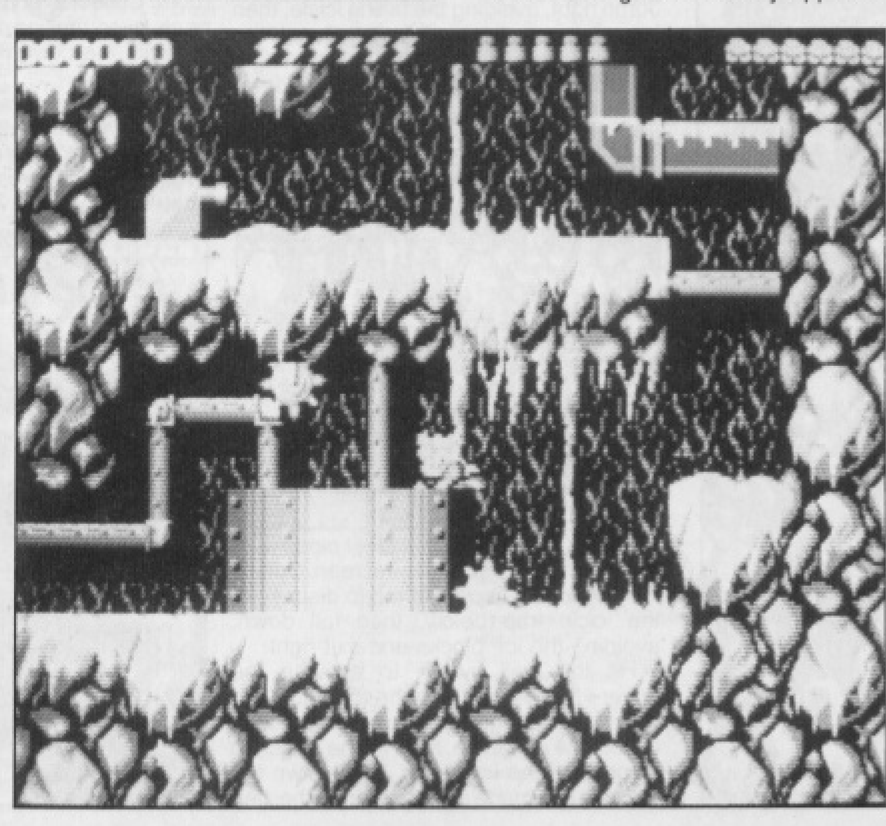
the bomb explodes (taking the penguin with it), climb down, walk left and jump up, shooting the guard when you get there. Hit the wall-switch to retract the spikes below, then dynamite the ice block. Drop down and slide another bomb to the right to blow the icicle trap. Drop down, climb up the centre ladder and crawl right to avoid the snowballs. Drop down, pushing left to land on the small metal platform below. Drop onto the two ice blocks, leave a bomb, then jump off to the right. When the right-hand block explodes, repeat with the left-hand block to kill the penguin. Collect the bonus dynamite and drop down.

Shoot the first guard, then jump up to take out the second. Slide a bomb into the two ice blocks, returning to the ledge to avoid the blast. Drop right down, shoot the penguin and climb the short ladder to hit the switch that activates the lift below. Climb down and get the bonus ammunition. Wait for the lift to go away before dropping down past the snowball machine. Drop down again, quickly jump onto the steel piping, then climb up and collect the TV bonus at the top. Come back down, drop onto the second TV bonus below, then time your next drop to avoid the first rotating cog. Jump up onto the steel vat, and duck and crawl past the second. Exit to the left.

Jump left over the steel spikes, then slide a bomb right, over the ledge, to destroy the icicles below. Jump across onto the steel vat and dynamite the guard. Climb up the short ladder to the left and slide a bomb into the block of ice. Quickly climb back down the ladder to avoid the explosion, then go back up to hit the wall-switch that retracts the steel spikes below. Climb down, drop to the bottom and crawl to the right, under the acid vat. Drop down, slide a bomb to the left to take out the icicle trap, and follow it down to collect the bonus dynamite. Jump on top of the steel vat and crawl to the other side to avoid the rotating cog above you.

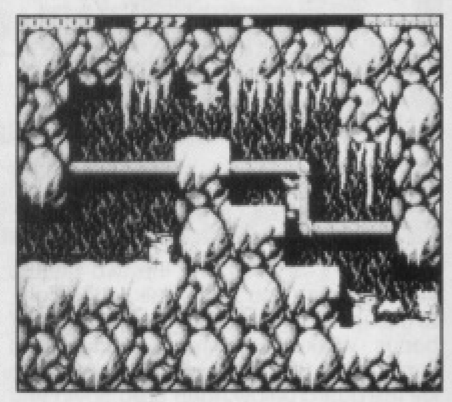
Drop down to where there are five frozen penguin-blocks and walk to the right. When the centre penguin thaws out, turn and shoot it. Drop down to the ledge on the right, and slide-bomb the guard below. Drop down to where he stood and shoot the wall-switch to retract the spikes on the





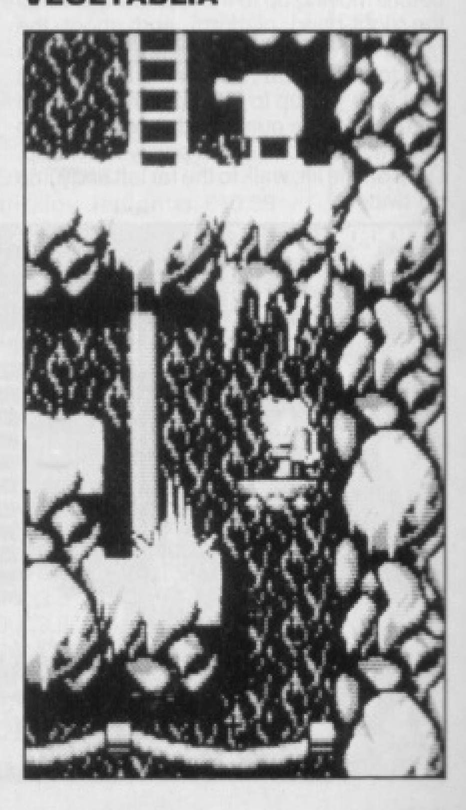
next ledge. Fall down, slide-bomb the icicle trap below and drop down another ledge. Slide-bomb the guard below and drop down when the coast is clear. Drop down two more ledges, collecting the bonus dynamite when you get there. Wait for the two sliding ice blocks below to cross past each other, then fall down, run right and jump onto the short ladder to avoid the next ice block, which slides on from the left. Take the next ladder up, collect the ammunition at the top and come back down, going back past the ice blocks and down the next ladder. At the bottom, drop to the next level and slide-bomb both guards. Drop down and shoot the switch on the left-hand wall. Crawl under the rotating cog, drop off the edge and slide-bomb the icicles to the right. Crawl through the passage, drop right onto the ledge and slide-bomb both guards. Drop down and run left to the exit.

Shoot both guards as they approach.



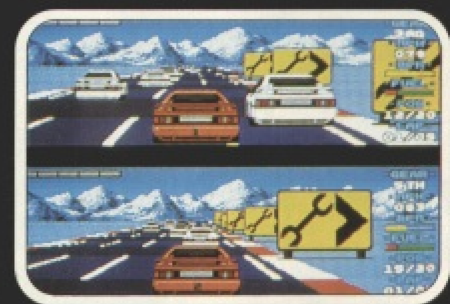
Jump up to the top, avoiding the falling icicle. Crawl past the rotating cog, drop down, killing the last guard. Exit to the left to complete the level.

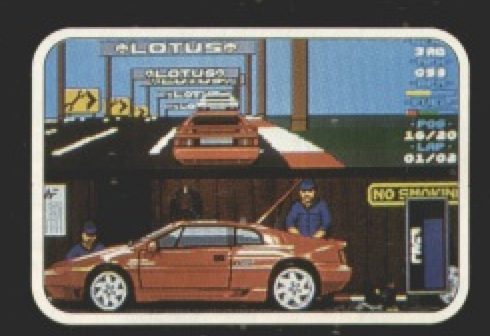
NEXT MONTH: THE FOREST KINGDOMS OF VEGETABLIA



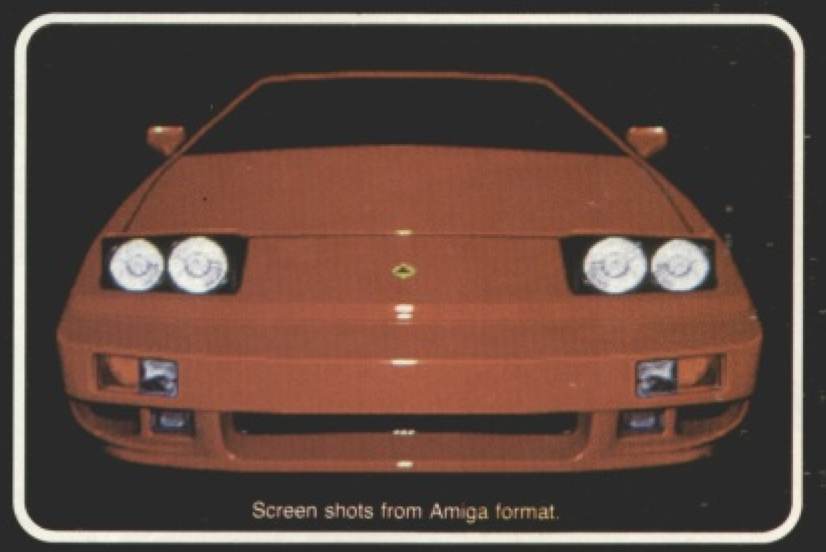
LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE











Screen shots from Amiga format.





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Narc

Gary Penn takes to cleaning up the streets in Ocean's conversion of the cult Williams' arcade machine.

WE ALL KNOW that drugs are not good. Positively bad in fact. Remember Zammo? Exactly. Just say no and live a little longer. Well anyway, get this: **Narc** features drug-taking, drug pushers, prostitutes, and carnage on an unprecedented scale.

However Narc's sordid theme is nothing but anti-drugs throughout – otherwise the tabloids would have field day. In fact, the message displayed on the Williams' arcade machine from which these conversions came is 'Winners Don't Use Drugs' (although apparently it wasn't implemented on the machine used for this conversion).

Surprisingly, Narc is only a training mission (!) where the prize for completion is enough credibility to join the Drug Enforcement Administration. The bad guy in this particular scenario is none other than Mr Big, and he's got plenty of supporters in the form of evil pushers and users.

The good guys (for this is a one or two player exercise) are HitMan, who has a penchant for blue attire, and Max Force, who prefers red to dead. Bearing more than a slight resemblance to that groovy movie vigilante **The Exterminator**, both Hit and Max are a bit tasty when it comes to kicking ass. Not only do they come armed with a machine gun and rocket launcher each, they are mighty fine jumpers and duckers.

Problem is for Hit and Max, Narc is realistic in its approach, to the extent that ammunition comes in limited supply. It also means that when the bad guys get shot, the claret's spilled by the gallon, and when they get blown up it's suddenly becomes difficult to distinguish the screen from an abattoir.

This training mission is set in a large city, split into more than a dozen horizontally scrolling, individually-named zones. The mission begins with a scroll along The Junkyard. To leave the street and enter The Subway you need to find the correctly coloured 'Safe Card', which is either simply lying around or in the hands of one of the bad guys. With The Subway cleansed, it's back onto the streets, this time better known as The Pipeline.

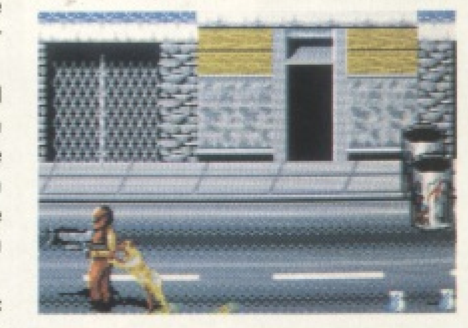
Further along the road you find the Krak Laboratory, filled with evil drug-making equipment which should be blown up at all costs. Then it's back out into the open, across the bridge that forms The Freeway, before a walk through Sunset Strip, The Kennels, Sky High's Nursery, The Greenhouse, and plenty more besides before you eventually confront Mr Big in Mr Big's Office.

Random Access is the team responsible for bringing Narc to the home. The programming was handled by Steve Snake (who did the lengthy presentation sequences along with the sound effects) and Greg Michael (who did all the actual in-game stuff). The graphics were copied from the coin-op by Shaun McClure and Ned Langman, while Sound Images provided the music. All in all, it was six months in the making. Quick, but by no means shoddy.

Incidentally, Narc is street slang for a drug-related law enforcer. It comes from 'narcotic'.

IGNORE FOR A MOMENT the fact that Max has completely destroyed a couple of bad guys with his rocket launcher. Look at the status panel at the top of the screen. This provides at-a-glance information on all the usual stuff, such as your score, state of health (the green bars), lives remaining (in this case loads 'cos we cheated), remaining bullets and bombs (top left and right), drugs and money 'recovered', busts made, and the name of your current location (top centre). Most useful of all though, is the radar in the centre. It shows a representation of all aggressors and collectables (in this case the drugs are to the left). So now you know.

HERE WE ARE in the Krak Laboratory, one of Mr Big's main drug-production lines. Max Force has just blown a CoatMan to smithereens and is about to let rip on those giant drug-filled flasks. The mean looking men in black are called Spike Rush, and they enjoy nothing more than throwing drug-filled syringes at do-gooders. The result is temporary paralysis, leaving the recipient vulnerable for a few seconds.



THERE ARE PLENTY of useful items to pick up along the way. Dead or busted bad boys drop money, drugs, rockets, and bullets. Some even release Safe Cards, used to gain access to other areas.

ANOTHER BIG BONUS opportunity awaits inside Sky High's Nursery Greenhouse. Ganja plants galore are growing in pots. All you have to do is 'collect' them for a special Ganja Bonus once the level is completed. Just in case you hadn't noticed, that Rambo lookalike is Sky High.



NARC
Random Access And Ocean

AMIGA

PRICE	£24.99
OUT	December
GRAPHICS	81%
SOUND	90%
PLAYABILITY	91%
VALUE	87%

OVERALL 90%

ATARI ST

PRICE	£19.99
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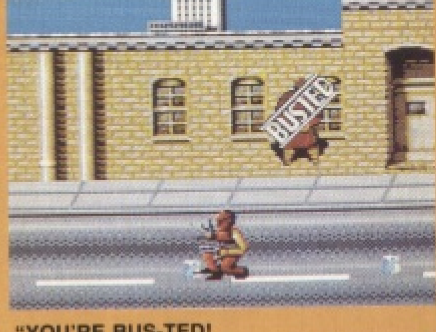
IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
N/A

SOUNDING OFF

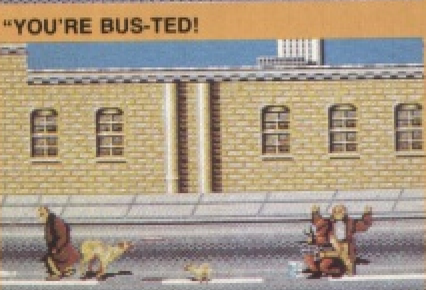
YOU LUCKY PEOPLE! You really are spoilt for choice when it comes to Narc's aural accompaniment. For accuracy's sake, Narc's speech and noises were all taken directly from Williams' original. You can kill to the tune of a 'hard' soundtrack, or delight to the sound of a splendid array of effects. It all sounds as though there's a war going on, what with an assortment of gunshots and explosions. Not forgetting the dogs' barks, Kinky Pinky's manic laugh, Sky High's grunts, and the Innocent Women – who gasp 'OOOH!' at your touch. "YOU'RE BUS-TED! exclaim HitMan and Max when they bust a bad guy Also, when one of the boys manages to get a Safe Card he says "WE'VE GOT IT! .

MR BIG'S BAD DUDES

IN TYPICAL WILLIAMS style, there aren't many different types of adversary encountered in Narc. Instead, the eight different types have very distinct characteristics. As an incentive to tone down the violence, massive bonus points are on offer to any player 'nice' enough to not to kill but 'bust' the bad guys. All that's involved is a little bodily contact instead of a bullet or bomb. Now, when a level is completed, the bust is added to your Bust Bonus. Any drugs or cash you collect from dead or busted bad boys boosts your Drugs and Cash Bonuses. There are also two other bonuses to be had: the Innocent Bonus (for rescuing an 'innocent' young lady from the clutches of a Kinky Pinky) and the Ganja Bonus (for collecting Ganja plants from Sky High's Nursery).



"YOU'RE BUS-TED!



BARKY the dog. It's difficult to tell whether he's hungry for your blood or your love. As you can see, shoot a Barky and it halves in size before running away.

COATMEN are pushers – scum of the worst kind. They home in on Hit and Max and more often than not shoot, sometimes dropping to the floor to make life difficult. Blast the slimeballs and force them to drop their filthy trade or the fruits of their 'labour'.

JOE ROCKHEAD is out of his skull. He's a PCP addict who carries blocks, which he dutifully throws in the general direction of Hit and Max. He also headbutts, so don't let him too near!

KINKY PINKY bears a passing resemblance to Mr McDonald, what with his shock of red curly hair and silly hooter. He packs a knife which he enjoys using. He also likes Hookers, which is why they get carried away with him.

SPIKE RUSH (AKA HYPOMAN) is one mean man. He throws drug-filled syringes which cause temporary paralysis in anyone they hit.

SKY HIGH by name and by nature. He looks a bit like Rambo with his large machine gun. Sky High has a greenhouse in which he grows marijuana plants, so bust his ass!

HQ POSSE is a smooth dude in a white suit. He and his like friends generally run around in a close-knit group, shooting at the good guys. He's also a bit of thieving git, who occasionally picks up any items left lying around.



BUGS appear in a swarm when Hit or Max hangs around doing nothing for too long. They are persistent, so keep moving!



THE ACTION REALLY HOTS UP on The Freeway, where enemy helicopters drop off bad guys and bombs. Fortunately some crazy fool has left a Porsche lying around, so hop in, take a ride and mow 'em all down! But watch out for the mines!



HERE'S A KINKY PINKY with a lady of the night over his shoulder, about to beset Max Force. Shoot him and she drops. But don't shoot her. 'Protect' her with your touch and rack up the bonus points. Obviously that's the last thing on your mind with old Barky giving it the large 'un from behind. There are four sub-levels to be found just off this area, known as Sunset Strip. There's The Kennels (featuring Barky dogs and money), The Swamp (with Bugs galore), Kinky's Big Top (wherein you will find many a Kinky Pinky and loads of drugs), and The Scrapheap (home to Joe Rockheads). And here's a handy tip: the Safe Card required to exit the level can be found in one of them!

DRUGS: THE HARD FACTS

HERE'S ALL you need to know about two legal and two illegal forms of drugs. It should go without saying that all are bad news.

TOBACCO
Despite the health warnings and the television advertising campaigns, smoking is one of the most common forms of legal drug addiction. It's crazy, especially when you consider the devastating effect tobacco smoke has on the human body... When tobacco smoke is inhaled, nicotine (the active ingredient in tobacco) acts immediately (but briefly) as a stimulant on the heart and nervous system, increasing the heart rate and elevating blood pressure. In the long term it produces shortness of breath and a nagging cough, and it can lead to cardiovascular and respiratory difficulties, chronic bronchitis, cancer, heart disease and ultimately death.

MARIJUANA
Also known as Grass, Pot, Weed or Ganja, Marijuana is illegal in this and almost all other countries. Most users experience increased heart rate, and feelings of euphoria, relaxation, an altered sense of body image, and bouts of exaggerated laughter. However, Marijuana smoke has been found to have more cancer-causing agents than those found in cigarette smoke. It's also proven to reduce fertility in both men and women.

ALCOHOL
Another popular legal addiction. And again, the facts regarding its effects make grim reading... Alcohol first acts on the parts of the brain that affect self-control and other learned behaviour. This often leads to aggressive behaviour. In large doses alcohol can dull sensation and impair muscular coordination, memory and judgement. Taken in large quantities over a long period of time, alcohol seriously damages the liver and heart, and can cause permanent brain damage. A significantly large dose can lead to death. On average, heavy drinkers shorten their life-span by 10 years.

PCP
Phencyclidine, or 'Angel Dust'. A drug developed as a surgical anesthetic in the late 1950s. Its unpleasant side-effects mean that it's only legal function today is to anesthetise animals. Side-effects include muscle rigidity, loss of concentration and memory, visual disturbances, delirium, feelings of isolation, convulsions, speech impediment, violent behaviour, fear of death, and changes in the user's perception of their body.

A NARC IS the most controversial and violent piece of software ever seen. And it's a real hoot. The exhilaration experienced when you blow away the drug-pushing scum filth sons ofbitches is second to none, especially when the dregs of humanity explode all over the shop. Haha! Eat it, dirt bags! Of course, this isn't the sort of irresponsible talk your mother would like to hear. But at least the message is clear: while wasting any associated felons is not necessarily the answer, drugs are most definitely dumb. Whether Narc will turn you into psychopathic maniac is a matter of opinion. At least it goes to show that a game doesn't have to be big and clever to be entertaining. This is a cracking conversion of the outrageously playable arcade original. So what are you waiting for? Get Narc and give Mr Big one for us, eh.

ST DISCERNIBLE differences are few and far between. Atari ST Narc is every bit as enjoyable as its arcade parent.


PC WHAT A BLOW. There's not a remote chance of Ocean producing a conversion for this machine.



"Honey, I'll be back in a flash"



RICK DANGEROUS 2 *The Story So far.....*



BACK IN A FLASH FOR COMMODORE 64, SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD



...IGNORING THE FAT MAN, THE ALIENS PROCEEDED TO DISCUSS THE DETAILED STRATEGY OF THEIR IMMINENT TAKEOVER OF THE EARTH...
HEY, YOU'LL HAVE TO ELIMINATE RICK DANGEROUS TO HAVE ANY CHANCE!
..BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO UNTIE ME FIRST, IF YOU WANT ME TO CO--OPERATE...
'COS I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE TO FIND HIM!
O.K.. IT'S A DEAL, FAT ONE...
PARLIAMENT SQUARE..
The Late Night Sitting
FULLY LICENSED
..'EVENING, JOSE, THE USUAL TABLE, PLEASE.
'EVENIN,' SENOR DANGEROUS,... SENORITA..

CHIP'S CHALLENGE
Epyx And US Gold

AMIGA

PRICE	£19.99
OUT	January 1991
GRAPHICS	73%
SOUND	70%
PLAYABILITY	91%
VALUE	91%

OVERALL 88%

ATARI ST

PRICE	£19.99
OUT	January 1991

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

PRICE	£24.99
OUT	January 1991

Chip's Challenge

Gordon Houghton likes his chips, so we gave him a challenge.

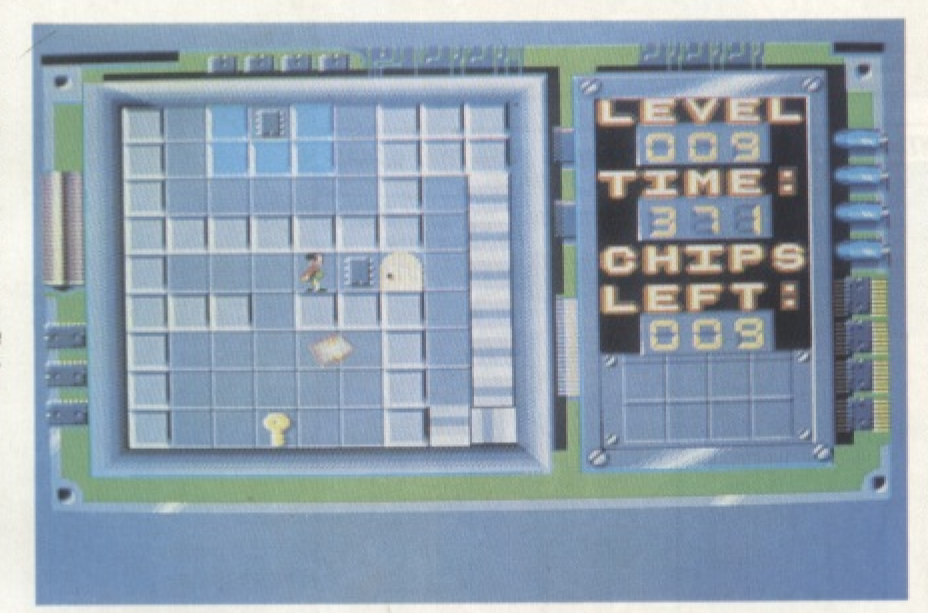


CHIP WILL DO ANYTHING for Melinda the Mental Marvel. More than anything else he wants to join her exclusive computer club, the Bit Busters. Imagine his excitement when, one day, she sat down next to him in the cafeteria and offered him membership!

Unfortunately, it was a deal with plenty of strings attached. Before he can even get his armpits sweaty inside a Bit Busters Tgshirt, Chip has to indulge in some heavy interfacing with 150 levels of puzzles, traps and monsters. What's worse, there is a time limit on every level – and once he's in there, there's no way out.

In the first eight levels Chip learns some hard facts about his environment. Coloured keys open corresponding doors, blocks of soil can be moved to create bridges over water traps or used as buffers against cherry bombs, and invisible partitions impede his progress. Then there are monsters and pitfalls: horrible bugs, crazy tanks, towering flames, tenacious traps, devious thieves who steal everything he is carrying... But one fact stands above all the others: he must collect enough chips before the time limit expires in order to progress to the next level. For *this* is **Chip's Challenge**...

"It might not look or sound like much, but Chip's Challenge packs a very addictive punch."



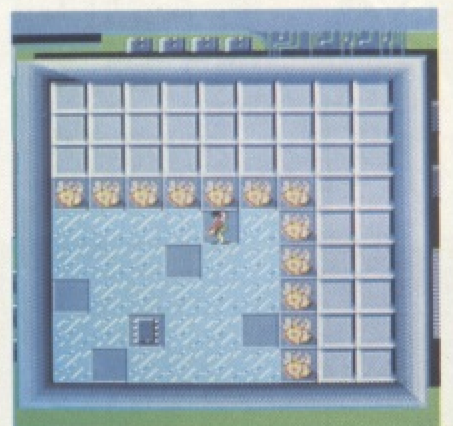
HAVING PASSED eight tutorial stages, Chip's first real test comes on Level Nine (Nuts And Bolts). All the puzzles in Chip's Challenge are logical: for example, to open this yellow door, Chip needs a yellow key, and it doesn't take a genius to spot one below. Avoiding those flaming fireballs, our underweight hero collects it and opens the door, not forgetting the chip as he passes through.



BEYOND THE ICE ROOM is a somewhat simpler puzzle. Pressing that green button at the bottom toggles the position of the blocks in front of the doors. If Chip steps on it once the pair of traps covers the blue and green doors. If he steps on it again they cover the yellow and red ones. Chip only needs a little patience (and a blue key) to progress beyond this room.



AFTER SKIPPING OVER a hazardous moving walkway, Chip blundered into a pale blue wall, which dissolved before his very eyes. He now finds himself in a room full of brown dirt blocks. But how can he get through that red door? The key lies above that deadly strip of water, and he hasn't collected a water shield, which would have allowed him to walk across its surface. Remembering his tutorials, he moves all four blocks into the water, collects the key, and opens the door.



BEYOND THE RED DOOR is a room of fire and ice. Chip hasn't got a fire shield to protect against the flames, nor any cleats to help him negotiate the slippery surface, so he just has to slide from one block to the next to grab hold of that elusive chip. And then he's got to find his way out...



PASSING THROUGH the red door, Chip went on a long ice ride to this area, packed full of bugs. Bugs are deadly and move around in mad patterns, bouncing off each other. Practising his skills of patience and light-footedness, Chip has little problem lifting the pair of prizes from this screen.

A IT MIGHT not look or sound like much, but Chip's Challenge packs a very addictive punch. The iconic graphics are colourful but little more than functional, and the musical accompaniment is inoffensive if endlessly repetitive – but in this game, the frills don't count. What you have is a puzzle*player's dream: apart from the first eight tutorials, every stage requires quick thinking (to beat the time limit), a lot of experimentation with traps, and more than a little patience, since even if you get killed as you are about to collect the very last chip you have to start the whole level all over again. To offset this, every level is accompanied by a password, so you needn't play any of the levels more than once. It's a doubly useful feature, since the game's one major drawback is that once you complete a stage you don't feel like tackling it again. Even so, with 150 very tough levels your brain will be tied in knots for a long time to come.

ST WHAT'S TRUE for the Amiga version also applies here: it looks and plays exactly the same.

PC DUE OUT at the same time as the other two, PC Chip's Challenge will support CGA, EGA, VGA (in EGA mode) and Tandy graphics, as well as AdLib and Roland sound.



COLLECTING a chip to the left of the bug room (a dissolvable wall puzzle), our hero tries the rooms below it. This section is slightly more complex, and involves shifting some dirt blocks. The problem is those bombs: if Chip touches them he dies, so he has to find a way to push blocks onto them.



THERE'S ONLY ONE more chip remaining – but where is it? In frustration, Chip leans against the movable block and knocks it up the screen. Miracle of miracles, underneath it lies the final chip! Not believing his luck, he heads for the exit back through the bug room.



MOVING THE DIRT BLOCK into the corner just above the entrance, Chip activates the button in the centre of the room. This releases the spinning fireball, which goes into an infinite loop. Chip then steps onto the trap which, after a short while, should release him. Success!

CHIPS WITH EVERYTHING

DID YOU KNOW that there are 13 meanings for the humble word 'chip'? They are as follows...

A small piece removed by chopping.

The mark left behind after chopping.

A counter (in games) used to represent money.

A thin strip of potato fried in deep fat.

The US and European name for 'crisp'.

A tiny wafer of semiconductor material.

A thin strip of straw used for making baskets.

In New Zealand, a container for soft fruit.

A sporting term meaning 'to loft a shot'.

To break small pieces from something.

To cut into small pieces.

To shape by chipping.

In Australia, to dig up a weed.

THERE ARE ALSO six commonly used phrases involving chips...

A chip off the old block. (A child who is very like his father)

To have a chip on one's shoulder. (To have a feeling of bitterness or resentment about something)

To chip in. (To interrupt or to contribute money)

To have had one's chips. (To have reached a point of no return)

When the chips are down. (When the going gets tough)

To cash in one's chips. (To die)

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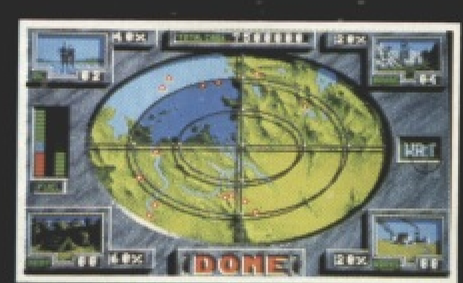
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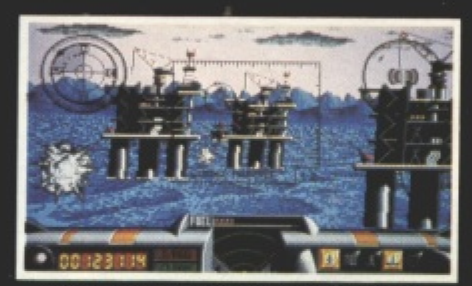
REVIEWED: ROBOCOP 2 SCI GREMLINS 2 POWERMONGER STRIDER ROGUE TROOPER



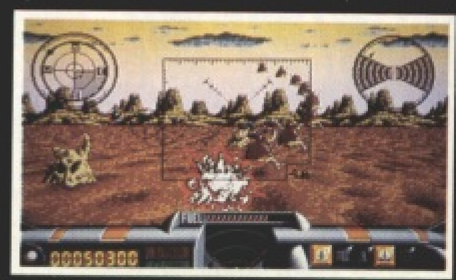




Time to plan your defence. Buy the facilities you need and then decide which sector needs your help the most.



Defend your oilfields from enemy domination.



Without your factories in the desert you cannot develop more weapons.



Arm your ship with the deadliest of weapons.



Avoid obstacles in your mission to destroy the Motherships.



Wave after wave of enemy aircraft will block your path to success.

ASK YOUR STORE FOR A DEMONSTRATION

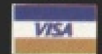
Shockwave brings the technology of advanced arcade machines into the comfort of your own home. Dip and weave through the various terrains whilst avoiding the hordes of aliens that swarm maniacally towards you, hell bent on your destruction. Survive vicious attacks from air and ground forces whilst using your skill as a pilot to avoid various land obstacles. Survive the hair-raising trench sequence to destroy enemy Motherships in the quest for your survival. A careful selection of weapons built by your team will ensure you will be armed and dangerous . . . but how dangerous?

FEATURES

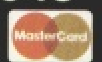
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Car-Vup

CAR-VUP
Core Design

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SOUND	82%
PLAYABILITY	0%
VALUE	86%

OVERALL

90%

ATARI ST	
PRICE	£24.99
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IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
N/A

Cartoon World is under attack from badness! Gary Whitta came to the rescue.

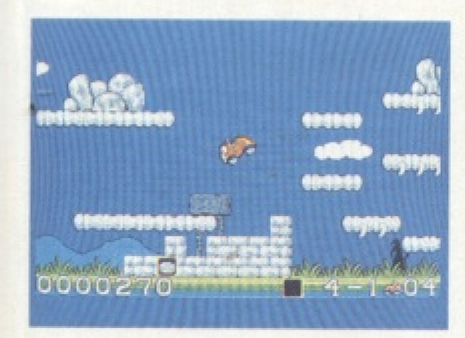
IN CARTOON WORLD, everything is lovely. Goodness, peace and tranquility rule, and no-one ever says bad things or has bad thoughts. There's lots of fruit to eat, the place is brightly coloured, and pretty platforms are used to get from place to place. It's hardly surprising that the inhabitants of Cartoon World are so happy.

One of the happiest occupants is Arnie, a friendly cartoon car. He likes living in Cartoon World because it's very nice. But it's not going to be very nice for much longer. A malevolent and thoroughly evil cartoon character by the name of Captain Grim (who is obviously unhappy about being badly drawn or coloured, or whatever it is cartoon characters get unhappy about) plans to take over Cartoon World and fill it with bad things.

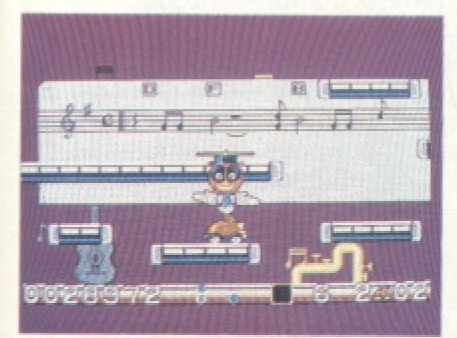
So evil is Captain Grim that he's willing to go to any lengths to see his dastardly plans come to fruition. He's kidnapped Arnie's cartoon friends and filled Cartoon World with an army of Loony Toons. Now Arnie's angry. So angry that he's screeched his little wheels and sworn to restore goodness to Cartoon World and save his pals. But how?

Cartoon World comprises 48 levels – six levels for each of the eight themed lands. To complete a level, all Arnie has to do is jump onto and drive over the full length of every platform. As Arnie motors over them, the platform's 'sections' are 'repaired' – the theory's a little like the ageing coin-op **Amidar**.

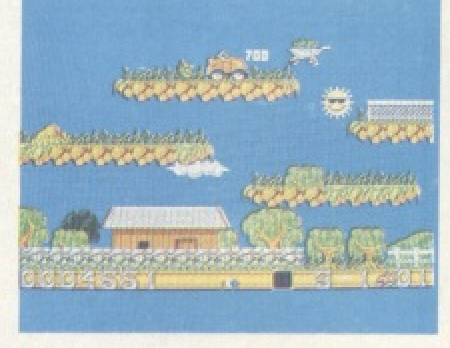
Platforms vary in length, from up to a full screen wide to a couple of sections. They are deviously arranged in such a way that it's not always easy to get from one to the other with Arnie's limited capabilities. A suitable route must be found if all the platforms are going to be covered and Cartoon Land is to become a happy and very nice place once again.



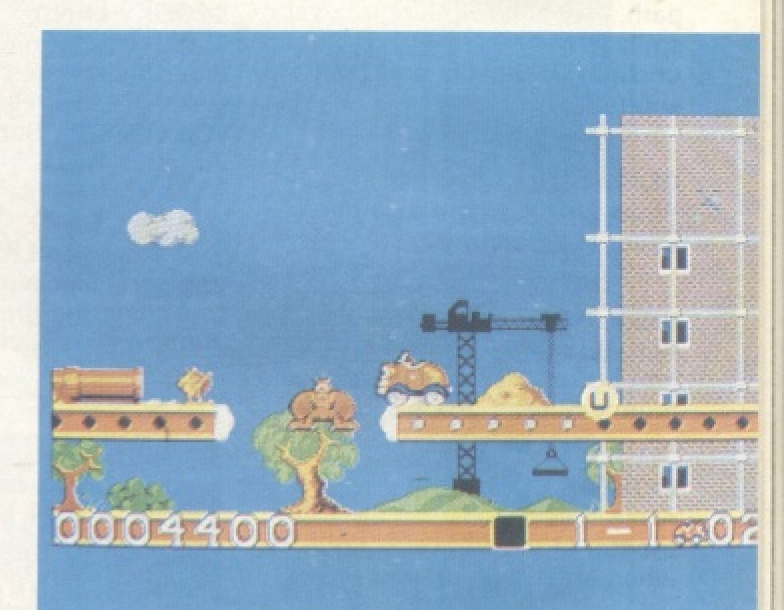
BECAUSE ARNIE is only a Cartoon Car he doesn't come equipped with power steering and an electric sunroof. He doesn't even have any brakes! This means the only way he can stop moving in one direction is to turn around and move in the other. Luckily Arnie's suspension is a bit good. So good in fact that he can make three types of jump – small, medium and large – to reach inconveniently-placed platforms. If Arnie jumps too far or too short, he's bound to miss his target platform and could even land on something nasty. Mastery of the jump is vital.



COLOUR IN ALL THE platforms, and Carl's chum Charlie Chopper comes along to carry him to the next level.



CAPTAIN GRIM'S deadly army of Loony Toons is out to stop Arnie on his quest. Fortunately there aren't all that many of them around. A well-timed jump usually sees Arnie alright, but the real problem is that avoiding Loony Toons costs precious colouring-in time. And with a strict time limit, every second counts.

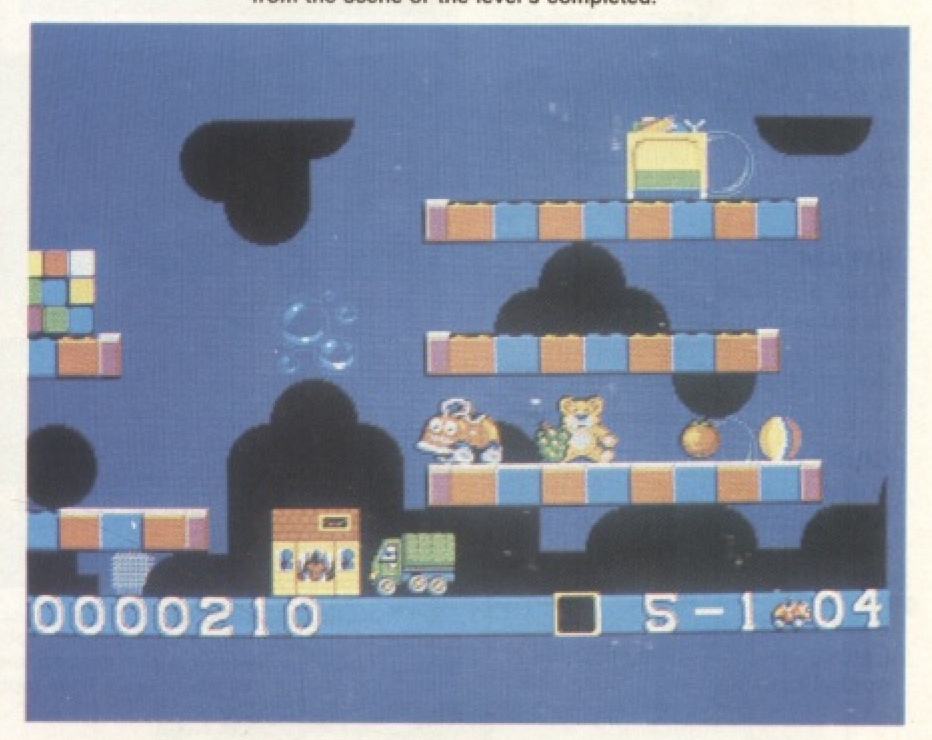


IF ARNIE HANGS AROUND on one level for too long, Captain Grim's right-hand man Turbo turns up to add to the frenzy. This flying demon swoops across the screen after Arnie. He's none too bright though, and so can't home in directly on Arnie. Problem is, he won't go away until he's either removed Arnie from the scene or the level's completed.



THE SIXTH LEVEL of each land is a special bonus section. There are no platforms to 'complete', it's just a run along a straight piece of land, during a rainstorm, in an attempt to improve your score by catching bonuses before they hit the floor.

NOW LET'S LOOK on the bright side. There are always plenty of food items around for Arnie to munch for bonus points. Occasionally it even rains bonus pieces! Keep 'em peeled in particular for letters that spell out the words EXTRA and BONUS. Complete the respective words for an extra life or a bonus, complete with pretty fireworks display.



SO SPECIAL!



EJECTOR SEAT
If any aliens appear directly above Arnie, this device springs up and destroys them.

SPARE TYRES
These fall off Arnie's rear, killing any alien behind him.

OIL CANS
Arnie can now squirt oil in his path. Any alien running onto the spillage goes into an uncontrollable spin and then snuffs it.

GUN
Allows Arnie to fire a single bullet at an enemy.

BIG FENDA
With this fitted Arnie can bump into other vehicles and destroy them without hurting himself.

MORTAR BOMBS
Arnie fires these in an arc from the top of the car, to explode when an alien runs into them.

DEPTH CHARGE
If an enemy is directly below Arnie, he drops one of these babies on them.

BACKFIRE
A special exhaust that belches out a lethal chuff of smoke, confusing any enemy behind Arnie.

STEAM
A jet of steam released from the radiator that goes through platforms and destroys any enemies above.

CARROT
Turns all the adversaries on the level into large carrots. Collect them for bonuses!

SMART BOMB
Guess what? This destroys everything bad on-screen.

CARTOON WORLD

BUILDING LAND
The first land in Cartoon World is a construction site. Here the platforms are girders waiting to have rivets put in and removed. The aliens come in the form of wheelbarrows, earth-movers, pneumatic drills and plastic cones.

TOY LAND
A child's delight, this land is made up from Lego blocks and Stickle Bricks. Arnie must put a 'shine' on all the Lego platforms to complete the level, while teddy bears and Rubik cubes look on. Watch out for the toy trains.

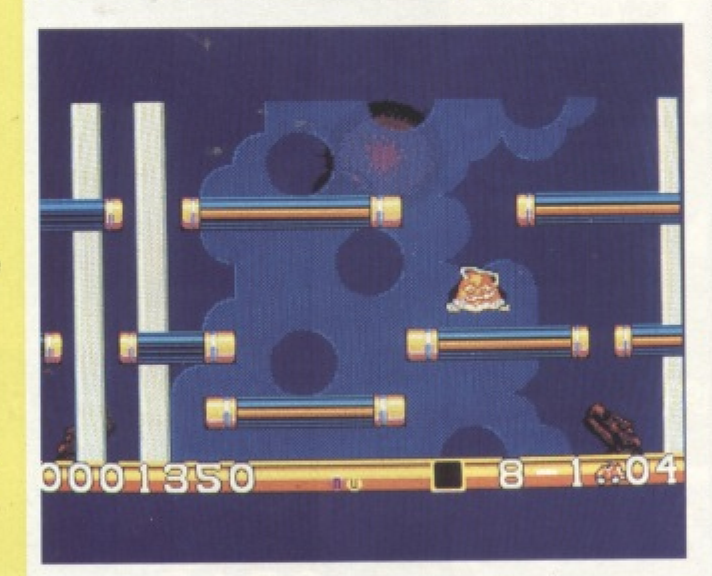
MUSIC LAND
Sheet music and notes provide the backdrop, while Arnie drives over the piano keys that make up the platforms. Suitably musical adversaries inhabit this level, including saxophones, cymbals and triangles.

SPOOKY LAND
In the dead of night, Arnie must clean up all the blood that's been spilt over the stone platforms and then progress inside the haunted castle. Watch out for Bats, vampires, ghosts, witches and mummies.

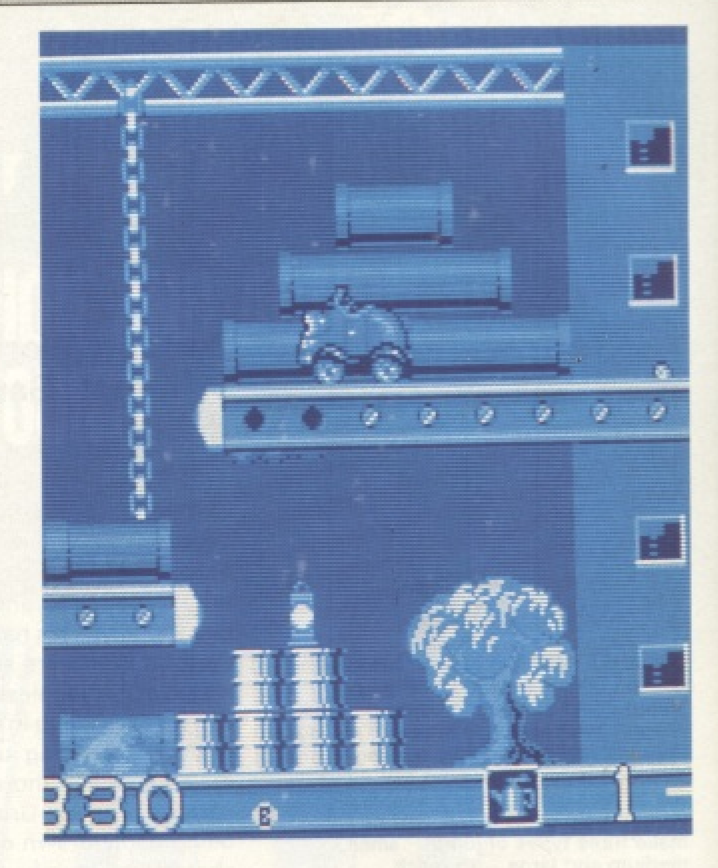
GARDEN LAND
You don't need Alan Titchmarsh to tell you that this particular plot of land is in big trouble. Arnie must 'cut' the grass from all the overgrown earth platforms and avoid the wheelbarrows and lawnmowers.



WHEN ALL OF Arnie's lives are lost he trundles off home, leaving Captain Grim to take over. As he coughs and splutters back to his ramshackle house, bits of him fall off and he makes a random comment about his feeble efforts. Aaaah...



BY COLLECTING SPECIAL icons which occasionally appear, Arnie can turn the tables on the Loony Toons. Seen here is the effect of the Freeze icon, which drops a sheet of ice over the land and temporarily stops every Toon (apart from Arnie) in his tracks.



PREHISTORIC LAND
One Million Years BC (Before Car)... Drive over the fossilised bones to make them 'grow'. Car-eating plants, dinosaurs and cavemen are all out to make you the car that time forgot.

WILD WEST LAND
In true frontier style all the platforms are logs, and Arnie must paint them white to give the levels that rustic feel. Cowboys, indians, six-shooters and cacti provide the problems.

WEIRD LAND
The final level is suitably bizarre. The platforms are pipes that need to be filled in, and zips to be zipped up. Tortoises, hands and hammers stand between you and success.

ST WHAT A BEAUT! Playing **Car-Vup** is reminiscent of playing the classic arcade and console games of years gone by, when playability took precedence over presentation. The emphasis is very much on simplistic gameplay, with the cute graphics bolstering the arcade feel. As a result, Car-Vup is tremendous fun to play. It's been thoughtfully designed, with the layout of the levels combining with the progressively intelligent aliens to produce one very tense atmosphere where real skill is the only guarantee of success – something that can't be said of many other arcade-style efforts. With the wonderfully colourful scenery and sprites, and suitably jolly tunes to accompany the action, Car-Vup delivers a superb slice of arcade action that passes its MOT with flying colours and promises to keep you going well into the new year.



EVERYTHING'S the same as on the Amiga really. There's no parallax scrolling for the background, but the playability's no worse for it.

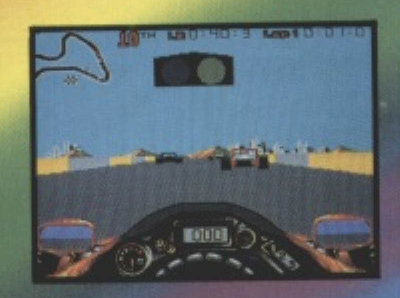


IT'S HIGHLY unlikely that Core will ever produce a PC version of Car-Vup. Sob.







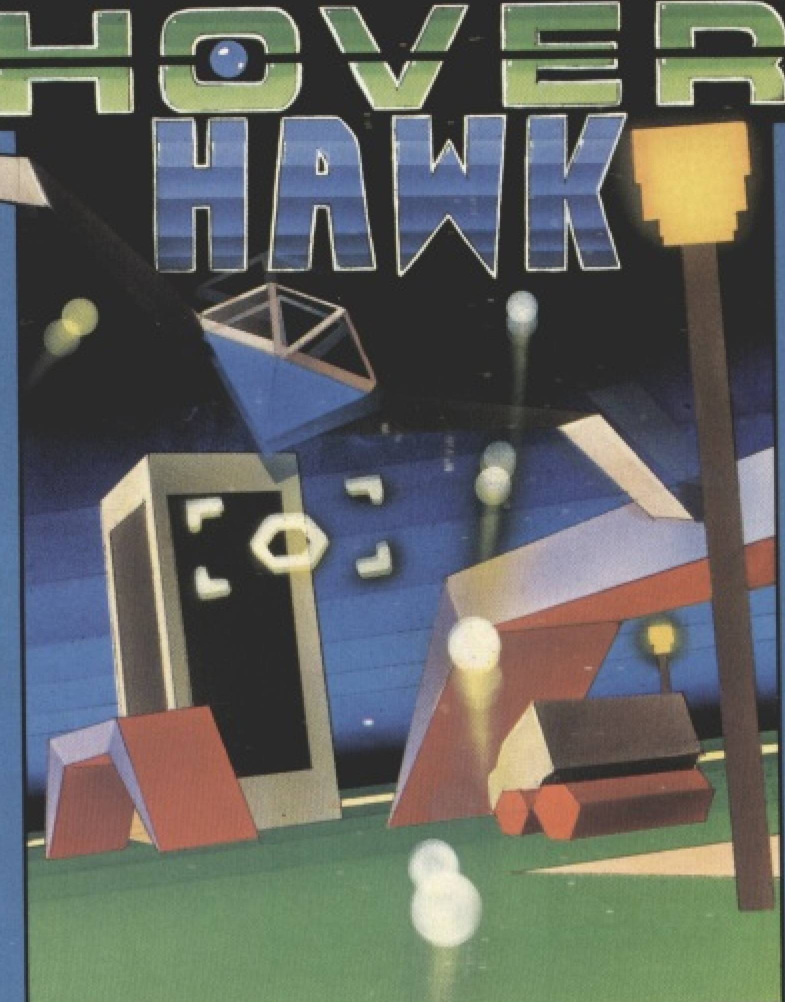


VECTOR CHAMPIONSHIP RUN is the most sophisticated 3D driving game ever seen on a 16-Bit computer. Stunning vector graphics portray the action as you jostle for position against the other cars, with only one thought on your mind - Pole Position.

Each one of the World's top racetracks has been painstakingly reproduced to bring you the ultimate in speed, accuracy and playability.

VECTOR CHAMPIONSHIP RUN - All that's missing is the bubbly !

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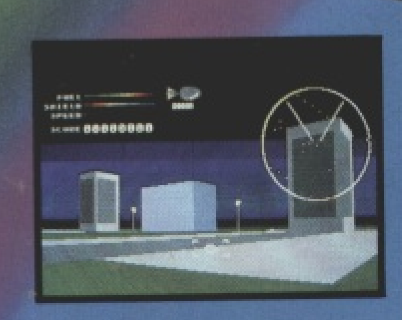


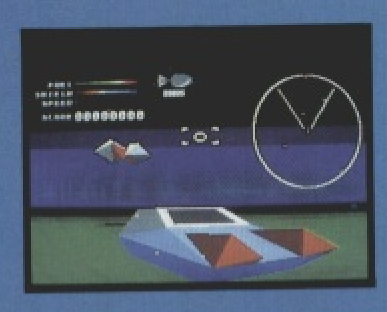
Not since the early 1990's has the World's balance of power been so fragile. Only this time the technology to fight back has been developed - THE CLASS ONE HOVER HAWK.

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The Way of Stones



I B M P C

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PATIENCE

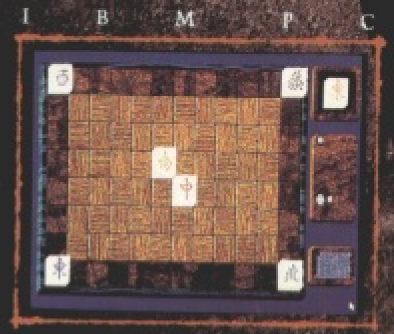
PLAY FOR ELEGANCE, MEDITATING OVER EACH MOVE WITH THE DELIBERATION OF A MASTER

INTUITION

LET THE ORACLE REWARD YOU WITH INSIGHTS AND ANSWERS TO YOUR INNERMOST QUESTIONS.



I B M P C



The Chinese called it *Shih Tao*, the ancient Celts called it *Runa futhark*, the Mayan Indians called it *Kami-a-hota*, and the Japanese called it *Ishido*. Yet, regardless of origin, when translated the names all mean one thing, *The Way of Stones*. From the first move, this ancient game and beautiful puzzle recalls the depth of chess and the simplicity of Go. Ishido will call upon your deepest powers of strategy and concentration as you match 72 stones on a board of 96 squares. As you merge with the game's many possibilities, you will have a chance to discover the heart of Ishido, and why, to some, *The Way of Stones* is more than just a game.

Designed by Michael Feinberg

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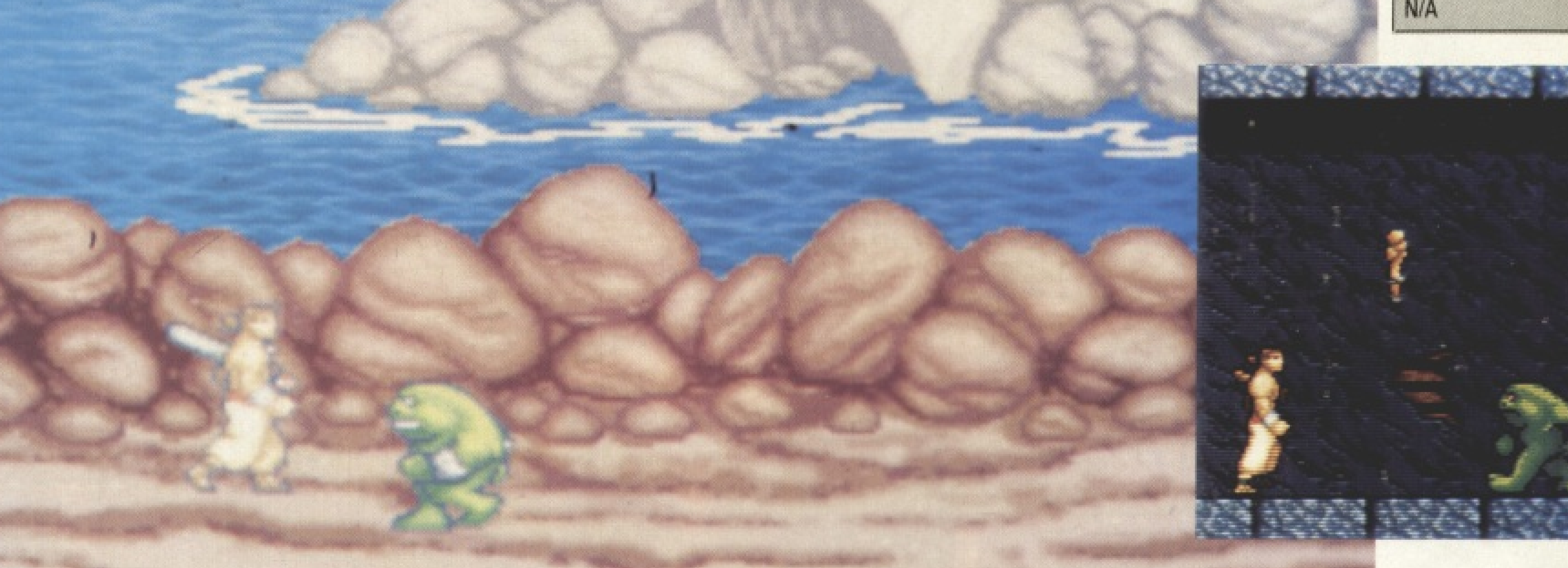
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DEATH TRAP
Anco

AMIGA	
PRICE	£24.99
OUT	Now
GRAPHICS	83%
SOUND	82%
PLAYABILITY	88%
VALUE	80%
OVERALL	**81%**
ATARI ST	
PRICE	£24.99
OUT	Now
IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES	
N/A	

Death Trap



HUBBLE BUBBLE

ABI IS INITIALLY armed only with a dagger, but as his potion-mixing potential grows, he can conjure up increasingly powerful – and bizarre – armament.



FIREBALLS are the basic upgrade, shooting horizontally across the screen.

BOOMERANGS behave like Fireballs but with greater flexibility – they come back, which means they can attack behind.

BOUNCERS do just that, hopping around the screen killing all they make contact with.

BATS fly about, homing in on anything in range.

LIGHTNING is one of the most deadly weapons. It shoots out from your hand in a similar fashion to the multi-way beam weapon from Turrican, eradicating all in its path. And, of course, there's the trusty smart bomb in the form of a Psychic MindBlast.

Gary Whitta gets into the Abi habit.

THESE EVIL WIZARDS really are getting a bit big for their magic boots. As soon as one gets destroyed, up pops another, complete with a bag full of nasty spells and curses to cause even more trouble.

The villain of **Death Trap** is typical of this situation. Shankriya, a magician of great renown and power, has gone a bit mental and subsequently started throwing his weight around. He's stolen a set of magical scrolls and hidden them deep inside his home, a five-level labyrinth. Such is Shankriya's power that no-one has the stones to take him on, and he's become the undisputed ruler of the land.

But not for long if you have anything to do with it. You are Abi, an athletic warrior and trainee magician from the wrong side of the tracks who's looking for a spot of adventure. Needless to say, the stories of the far-off labyrinth known as the Death Trap where all the would-be heroes have died are right up your street. Grabbing a dagger and your Observer's Guide To Magic Spells, you set off...

The action begins in the castle home of Shankriya, where the adversaries are suitably subdued. The marauding white-sheet ghosts and plodding troll-creatures don't pose too much of a threat – a swift dagger-slash soon sees them off. The real threat is provided by the labyrinth itself. Finding your way around can be a nightmare, and with some kind of trick or trap at every turn, it can be tough going.

But then that's all in day's work for a hardened hunk such as yourself.



TRAP HAPPY

THE WIZARD'S labyrinth isn't dubbed the Death Trap for nothing. So fast and silently-efficient are some of the deadly devices that once they strike it's too late to avoid them. The poisoned-spike pits are deadly to the touch but easy to spot and avoid, whereas falling blocks crash down on you with no warning in certain parts of the labyrinth. Trial and error is the only way to make progress – unless you are lucky of course.

WHO ARE THOSE GUYS?

A QUICK GUIDE to some of the adversaries you can expect to encounter in the Death Trap...



GHOSTS are the basic enemy, flying about randomly looking for somebody to scare. A single shot dispatches these guys.



FROGS are jumpy little suckers that won't stay still for you to shoot them. However, most of them hop about at random and so aren't too dangerous.



LEECHES are a real pain. Because they stay so low to the ground, they are very difficult to shoot. If one of them gets too close, it jumps on your shoulder and drinks all your potions!



PHANTOMS are like ghosts, except they have an annoying habit of continually disappearing and reappearing where you least expect them.



WIZARDS rarely appear, but their magical powers make them very dangerous. Watch out for the one who can freeze Abi in his tracks!



VOLANTS are the biggest pain of the lot. They swoop in at high speed and drop rocks on Abi's head. The only way to kill them is to jump up and fire as they attack. Worse still, they won't give up until Abi is dead!



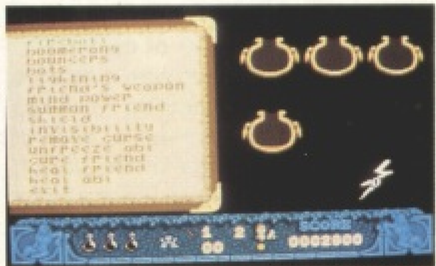
A LEVEL wouldn't be a level if it didn't have an end-of-level Boss. And Death Trap has more than its fair share of big boys. They may be huge, but each one has its own particular Achilles' heel. You need only find it and exploit it to triumph.

POTIONS

SOME ADVERSARIES leave behind a magic potion when they die. There are three types of potion – red, green and blue – which, when mixed, produce powerful magic spells.



The theory behind the magic potions is really very simple. Red potions make weapons, green potions cast spells (such as Shield and Invisibility), and blue potions help to recover Abi's lost energy, lift curses and so on. One of the more useful spells you can cast is Summon Friend, which calls up a cheerful Will O' The Wisp-ish character who helps you to duff up the enemy and collect potions. Better still, grab a 'real' chum to control the Friend with a second joystick.



Pausing the action at any time allows you to flick through your book of spells. Apart from the list of all the spells you know, the book also shows three coloured phials containing the quantities of red, green and blue potion collected so far. Select a spell and you are shown how much of each colour must be mixed to cast it – the more powerful the spell, the more potion you are likely to need. It's up to you to decide if it's worth pouring away your precious potions to cast a particular spell.

TRAP YOURSELF A PRIZE!

Courtesy Of Anco

HEY HEY HEY! ANCO'S given us 10 copies of Death Trap to give away. All you have to do to stand a chance of winning a copy is correctly answer the three question below, jot them down on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope, and send it to TRAP HAPPY, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The first 10 completely correct entries drawn after December 28th 1990 win their senders a copy of Death Trap. Oh yes – don't forget to state ST or Amiga!

THE QUESTIONS

1) What's the name of Death Trap's hero?
2) What's the name of Death Trap's bad wizard?
3) How many levels does Death Trap feature?

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Employees of EMAP Images and Anco are exempt from entry.

A AS ARCADE ADVENTURES become increasingly more convoluted and sophisticated, it's nice to see one that goes back to the roots of straight forward exploration and termination. Each of the five levels has well over a hundred screens, and they are designed in such a way that simply finding a route is a task in itself. It's a map-maker's dream. The puzzle element is simple enough so as not to detract from the action, with the emphasis on finding switches to open corresponding doors. The traps that make the levels so deadly have been well designed too, although there is the odd one, such as the spikes that shoot up from the floor, that seem a little unfair because they give no warning before they strike. Those with photographic memories should have no problem though. The magic potion spell-book is a refreshing variation on the 'collect the tokens' theme. There's nothing bland about the weaponry either – the bats and bouncers are hilarious! And it's all iced with some very pretty graphics (the end-of-level guardians are particularly impressive) and an atmospheric soundtrack. The only thing that might put people off is the difficulty level – even Rick Dangerous would have to think twice about this one!



ATARI ST Death Trap is to all intent and purposes identical to the Amiga version reviewed here.



ANCO HAS no plans at present for an IBM-compatible version of Death Trap.

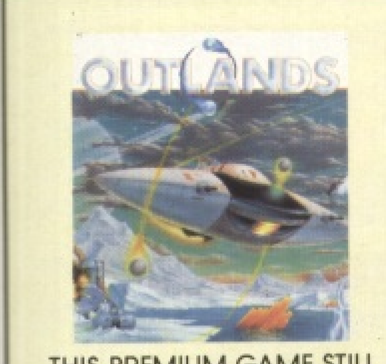
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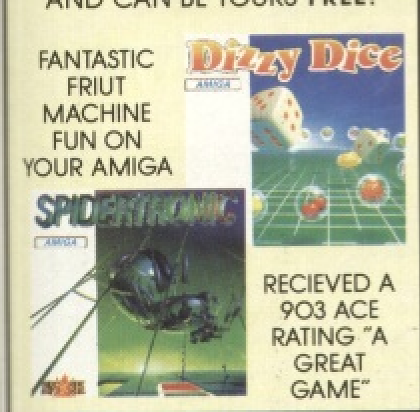
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Masterblazer

MASTERBLAZER
Lucasfilm Games And Rainbow Arts

AMIGA

PRICE	£24.99
OUT	Now
GRAPHICS	83%
SOUND	84%
PLAYABILITY	89%
VALUE	80%

OVERALL 86%

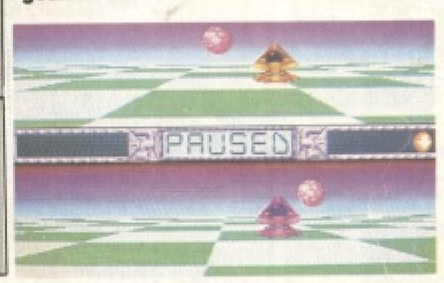
ATARI ST

PRICE	£24.99
OUT	December

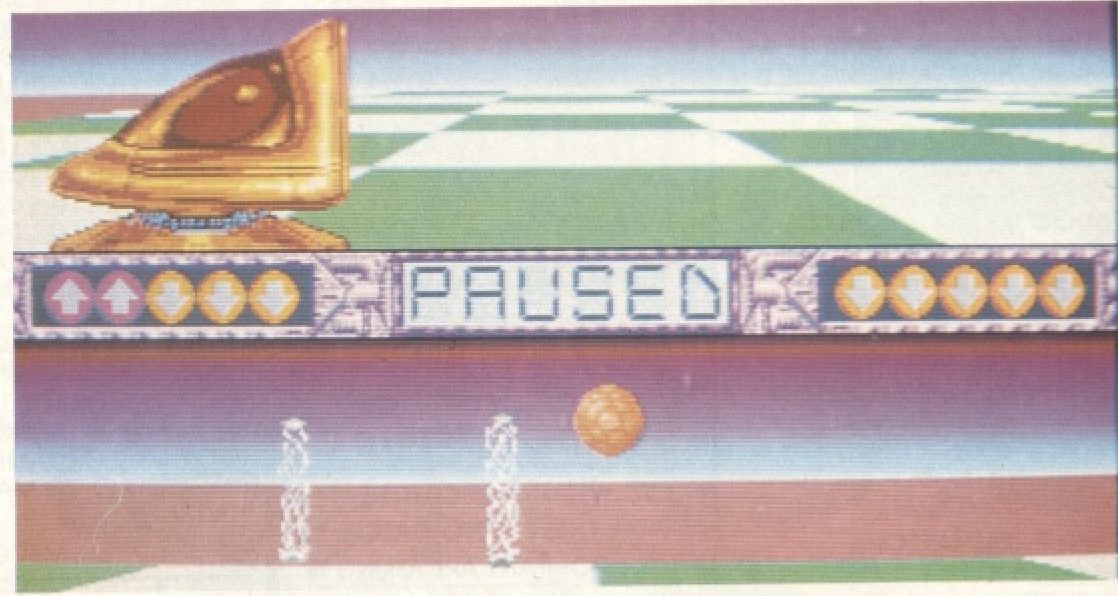
IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

PRICE	£24.99
OUT	Late December

THE ROTOFOIL, able to accommodate both humans and droids, is 20m high, weighs 3000kg, and can move in any direction within the pitch boundaries. It has two axis thrusters which enable it to cruise up the pitch at a velocity of 10 squares (50m) per second. When not in possession, the Rotofoil automatically faces in the direction of the Plasmorb. When you have possession, it 'snaps' to face in the direction of your opponent's goal.



WHENEVER A Plasmorb is released (at the start of a match or after a goal) players begin the action from their own goal line. The orb then appears in the centre and it's a mad scramble as both contestants try to gain possession. The length of a match (between one and nine minutes) and the level of opponent are both determined before the action starts.



THIS IS THE Masterblazer Playfield. The individual squares (alternating green and white) measure five metres, and the whole pitch is walled by an invisible inertia-reversing Electro-Boundary. The Goalbeams at either end of the pitch move constantly from side to side, and consist of columns of visible energy. The high-energy Plasmorb is about half a metre in diameter, weighs 1000kg and floats two metres above the surface of the pitch: it bounces off the boundaries unless it's between the Goalbeams.



THE 3D RACE is a bonus to the main event. Two players battle through a series of obstacles within the boundaries of the Playfield.

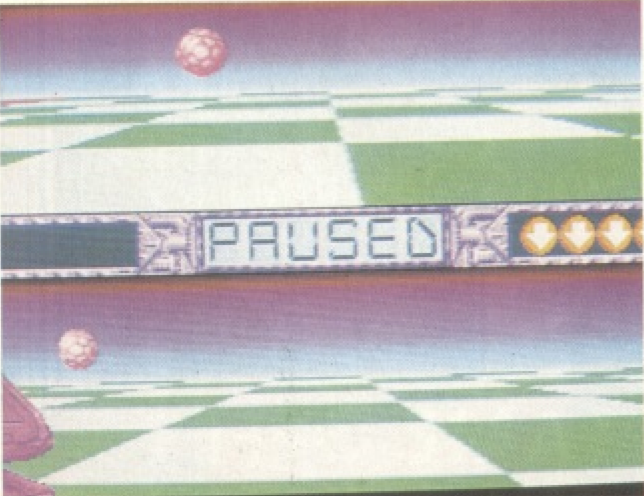
AT THE END of the day, this is what it's all about. Different points are awarded for goals depending on how far away you were when you released the Plasmorb. A tap-in on the goal line gets one point, a medium-range shot gets two, and an over-the-horizon special (where you can't see the goal) is awarded three points. A handy tip: two points can be converted into three by reversing over the horizon just before you shoot. The winner is the first player to reach 10 points, or the one who has most points at the end of the time limit.

Gordon Houghton gets his Rotofoils round a new version of an old classic.

IT IS MANY CENTURIES since the Great Madness ravaged worlds with interstellar space battles. Then came a time of peace, when the only battles were fought on the **Ballblazer** pitch: Ballblazer was a sport derived from military exercises involving rapid acceleration and snap changes in direction.

Now **Masterblazer** has arrived - the same sport, but faster and smoother than ever before. The concept is simple: two players attempt to score as many goals as possible against each other within a predetermined time limit. The Playfield is set on a small artificial asteroid (and so is slightly curved), the players fight for possession of a Plasmorb (the ball) using Rotofoils (a kind of fast hovercraft), and an opponent's goal gets narrower the more goals he concedes.

Contestants can participate either in solo matches against other human beings, or against nine levels of droid. There's also a knockout competition in which up to eight human players fight it out for a trophy, and a two-player 3D race.



POSSESSION is gained by drawing the Plasmorb within range of the Rotofoil's 'Pullfield' (a kind of force field), and relinquished by pressing the firebutton (which causes the Rotofoil to recoil). The only other way a player can be dispossessed is by tackling: this basically involves chasing the opponent, bumping into it or the Plasmorb, and expanding the Pullfield lots of times.

A Masterblazer proves that successful concepts are timeless: Ballblazer, the original 8-bit one-on-one future sport on which Masterblazer is based, is now over five years old. The original's gameplay has been left unscathed there are minimal additions in terms of sound and graphical effects, and the movement is a lot slicker, but the essential action is as fast and furious as it ever was. As with the original, it plays a lot better with two human players, since people are unpredictable and switch tactics to suit the situation. That's not to say that the computer opponents are a waste of time - it will be many moons before anyone new will knock more than a couple of goals past the ninth Droid. Masterblazer's additions are only structural - you can compete in a cup competition, watch the demonstration, check out the Rotofoil specifications, or try the 3D race sequence. These extras don't really add much to the sport itself, but it's nice to have them all the same. The idea behind Masterblazer is big enough to stand on its own: it's simple, it's original, and it works brilliantly.

ST The news is good: apart from toned-down musical accompaniment, there should be no differences in gameplay.

PC Rainbow Arts is keeping its Rotofoils under its hat on this one. PC Masterblazer should be the same, but check it out for graphics modes and sound support first.

EPIC - A LEGEND BEYOND TIME

From the development team which brought you F29 Retaliator now emerges **EPIC** - a sci-fi extravaganza featuring spectacular graphics and stunning game-play.



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RAINBIRD

BETRAYAL



A WEB OF INTRICATE POSSIBILITIES - BUT FAIR PLAY ISN'T ONE OF THEM

MASTERS OF STRATEGY

ROBOCOP 2	
Special FX And Ocean	
AMIGA	
PRICE	£24.99
OUT	Now
GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	89%
PLAYABILITY	88%
VALUE	84%
OVERALL	**86%**
ATARI ST	
PRICE	£24.99
OUT	Early December
IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES	
TBA	

RoboC

Even in the world of law enforcement, there's always room for improvement. But is the same true of film conversions? Gary Whitta goes on the beat with Special FX's RoboSequel.

DESPITE THE ADDITION of one mean metal muther to the police force, and the subsequent 'removal' of one of the city's most vicious crime lords, the situation in the Detroit of the future is no better. In fact, it's a damn sight worse.

It's all down to Nuke, a deadly and instantly addictive new drug that's flooding the streets courtesy of Cain, the city's new crime kingpin. With the cops still on strike over pay, Cain and his drug-crazed gang has had a free run of the city. Until now.

RoboCop is back on the case, with a shiny new two-tone suit to mark the occasion. Determined to put a stop to Nuke and the scum who sell it, our Robo's not taking any bull from the spaced-out hoodlums who stand in his way. But then the greatest danger may come from within...



ROBOCOP'S PRIME DIRECTIVES

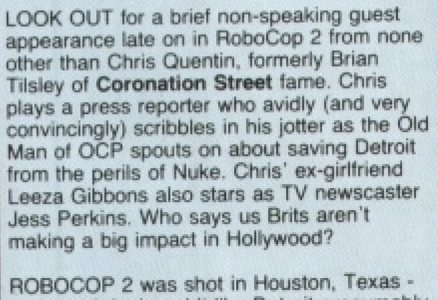
1) Serve The Public Trust
2) Protect The Innocent
3) Uphold The Law

NOT FORGETTING A FEW AMENDMENTS...

233) Restrain hostile feelings.
279) Take Particular Care To Avoid Offending Anyone At Any Time For Any Reason Whatsoever
246) Don't Rush Traffic Lights
252) If Somebody Shoots At You, Find Out Why And Explain To Them Their Attitude Is Unproductive
276) When Any Directive Contradicts Another, Obey Both
283) Be Accessible To OCP Employees At All Times



THE FIRST LEVEL takes place at the River Rouge, Detroit's top sleazy nightspot and home to Cain's hidden Nuke processing plant. Having located the place, Robo doesn't waste any time breaking in and cleaning up the trash. Unfortunately, Cain's slipped away out the back door, but at least Robo can put a dent in his business by collecting all the Nuke he can find (a minimum of 10 canisters) and then smashing up the computer centre controlling the whole operation.



ROBOFACTS

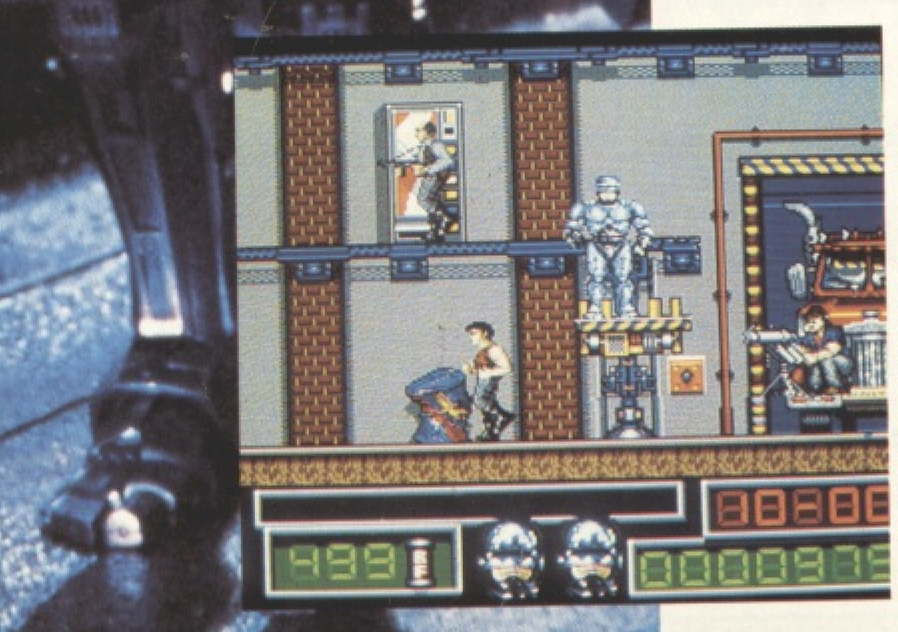
ROBOCOP 2: The Movie is 118 minutes and 10,481 feet of film long.

ONE SCENE that was, unfortunately, cut from RoboCop 2 was an advert for a female robot called Ready Betty - The Future Of Safe Sex.

LOOK OUT for a brief non-speaking guest appearance late on in RoboCop 2 from none other than Chris Quentin, formerly Brian Tilsley of **Coronation Street** fame. Chris plays a press reporter who avidly (and very convincingly) scribbles in his jotter as the Old Man of OCP spouts on about saving Detroit from the perils of Nuke. Chris' ex-girlfriend Leeza Gibbons also stars as TV newscaster Jess Perkins. Who says us Brits aren't making a big impact in Hollywood?

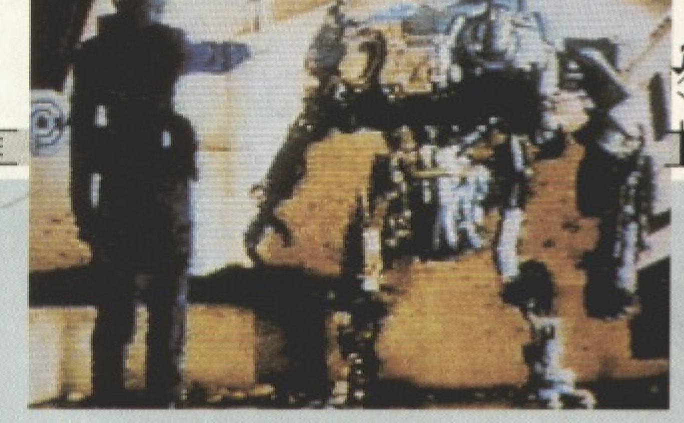
ROBOCOP 2 was shot in Houston, Texas - because it looks a bit like Detroit presumably - with the use of several unusual locations. The abandoned Jefferson Davis Hospital was remodelled as Cain's illicit Nuke laboratory. Well there you go.

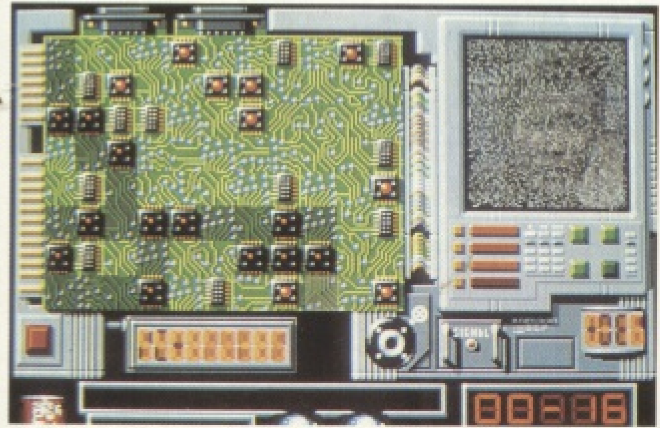
THE ORIGINAL RoboCop was so violent that only quick last-minute editing of certain scenes saved the film from the dreaded 'X' rating. The scene where OCP Executive Kenny is blown away during the demonstration of ED-209 had to be heavily cut. Originally the defective droid pumped bullets into the unfortunate executive for a full TWO MINUTES. At the pre-launch showing, everybody thought it was hilarious - except the censors.



WHEREVER YOU GO it's a good bet that an army of Cain's cronies aren't far away - and determined to put Robo on the OCP scrap heap. Due to the supremely hard nature of RoboCop's Titanium and Kevlar armour, the majority of the bad guys (who shoot at him with pistols and rifles) don't cause much of a problem. But the artillery support, in the form of men with mortars and rocket launchers, can seriously sap Robo's energy and so must always be taken out first.

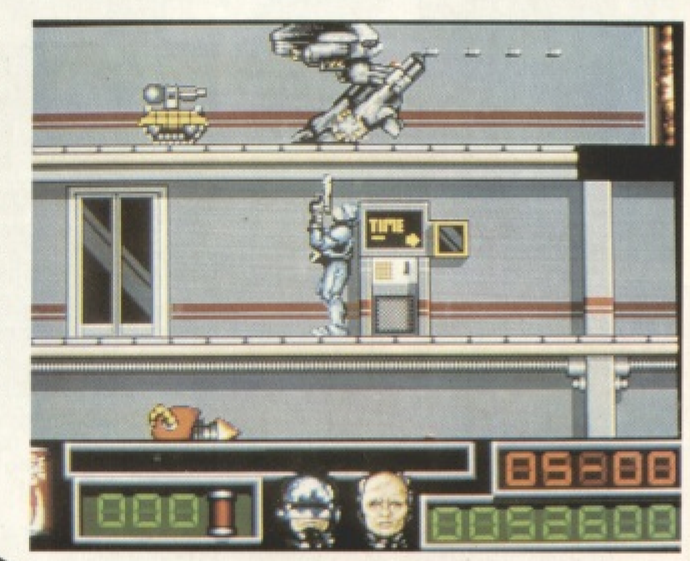
Cop2

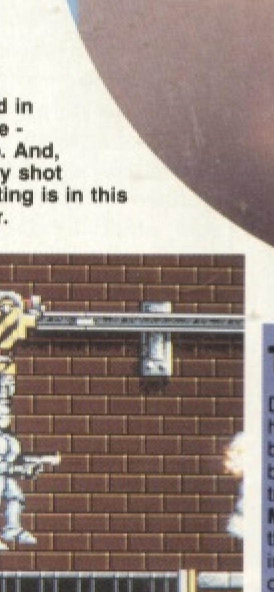
BETWEEN ROUNDS of blowing away Nuke-sniffing punks, RoboCop attempts to piece together memories of his former life as Alex Murphy. Peeling away Robo's armour to reveal his electronic innards, this puzzle section has you attempting to join up all the lights on the circuit board by tracing a line through them all. You can't backtrack or cross over your line, and microchips strategically set into the circuitry block your progress. Each time a puzzle is completed, the fuzzy TV screen becomes clearer, revealing part of a memory-jogging digitised picture underneath. Complete all four puzzles and an extra life is yours.

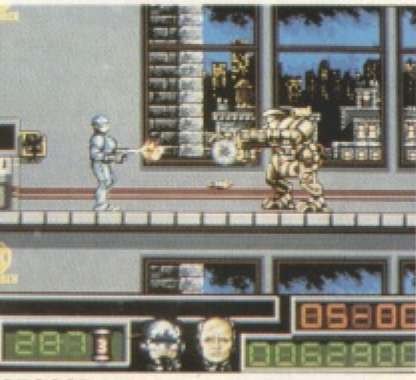
THE LAST of the three action levels takes you to Detroit's Civic Centrum, where OCP is showing off its plans for Delta City, as well as the new RoboCop 2. What only a few people (including Robo) know is that the near-indestructible fighting machine is actually Cain resurrected, just waiting to go berserk in his search for Nuke! But before Robo can confront Cain, he must make his way through the Civic Centrum's automated defences. Laser-packing HoverBots, wall-mounted rocket launchers and even the dreaded ED-209's all stand in Murphy's way. A few well-timed shots soon put the defences to 'sleep'. Once at the top of building, Robo's ultimate adversary awaits...





WITH HIS MEMORY in order, Robo proceeds to the firing range to calibrate his gun. Targets slide on and off the screen, *a la* the original RoboCop, but this time they are cardboard people anyway. The toughest aspect is catching the good from the bad in the few seconds you have to aim and fire - shooting a baby in its pram doesn't help. And, with only 25 rounds of ammunition, every shot counts. The more accurate Robo's shooting is in this round, the more effective his gun is later.



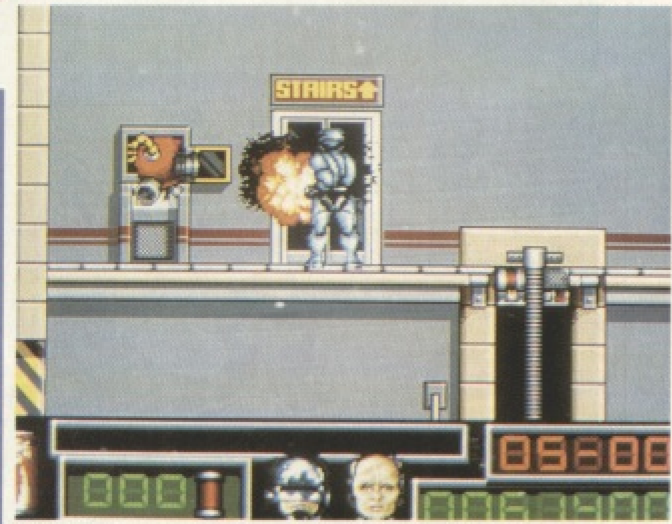


ROBOCOP 2 is nick-named The Monster - and you can see why. Cain's personal armoury comprises a lethal six-barrel mini-gun and a retractable arm that delivers a nasty uppercut. The Monster is so tough that for a while all Robo can do is avoid his attacks and try to draw his successor down to street level where he can be destroyed. Only then will the city be purged of Nuke and the end credits begin.

BACK TO THE ACTION... Robo's mission here is to arrest the sinister powder-peddler Cain. To make things tougher, the layout of this level is a lot more convoluted and dangerous, with some particularly nasty moments. These acid vats, for instance, can only be negotiated by jumping onto the overhead cargo hooks and letting them carry you across. Mistime your jump and you become RoboHistory.

THIRD TIME LUCKY?

DESPITE RoboCop 2's lack of success both here and in America, **RoboCop 3** is already being worked on. Frank Miller is rumoured to be writing the screenplay once again, this time with the help of Fred Decker (of **The Monster Squad** fame) who also directs. But there's to be no Peter Weller - he's not interested in a third movie. The hunt is now on for someone to replace him. Fans of the first two movies will be disappointed to hear that, according to our Hollywood insiders, the third installment is to be toned down considerably and aimed at the kids' market. Apparently Robo is a big hit with the pre-teen **Turtle** clan thanks to a new cartoon series and a toy range based around the Kevlar-clad copper. The new movie will have to do away with all the OTT violence that made the first two famous if it's to get the PG certificate it would need to pull in the young 'uns. Is nothing sacred?



MOST OF THE LEVELS are bigger than they first seem. They are actually layered, so when one area is clear (or as clear as it's going to get), you punch through a weak spot in the wall (or a door, or whatever) to reveal the next section. Don't panic, it's easier than it sounds.



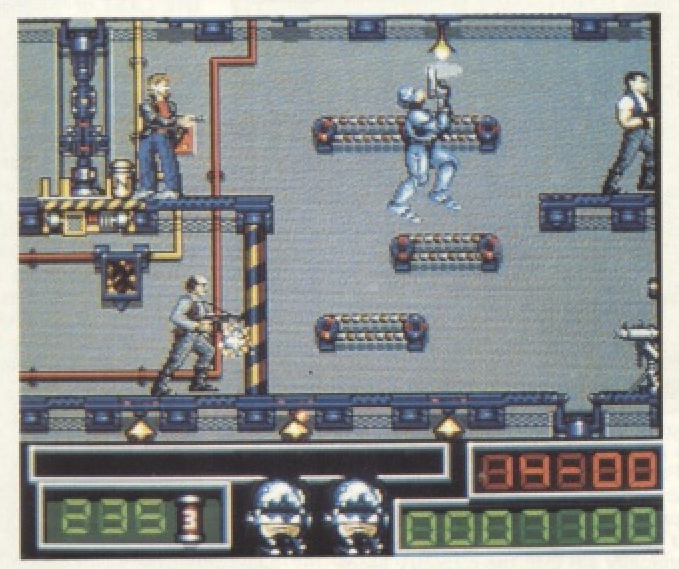




DIGITISED PICTURES from the movie appear between levels to help carry the story along and generate a suitable film-like atmosphere.



COLLECTING HOSTAGES is a good way to earn extra lives. They are easily recognisable, waving their arms around and shouting 'Help!'. Rescuing 10 chumps results in an extra RoboLife. Shooting a hostage carries an energy penalty.



BOXES SET INTO walls and cartons left lying around should be blasted to reveal Nuke canisters and useful power-ups for Robo's gun. Scatter Bullets fly in all directions, Three-Way fire off in a T-formation, and Rapid Fire provides continuous fire. But beware - all special ammunition is limited, and once expended it's back to regular RoboRounds.

MODEL YOURSELF ON ROBOCOP!

With These Tasty Ocean Prizes!

YES INDEED! Now you too can serve the public trust, protect the innocent and uphold the law – albeit on a slightly smaller scale. The lucky winner of this competition is going to walk off with not one, not two but THREE limited-edition RoboCop model kits from Forbidden Planet. The three kits in the series are RoboCop himself, his arch-enemy ED-209 and a scale replica of Robo's gun! And these kits don't come cheap - oh no. Together these models are worth well over a hundred pounds! And there's more! Ten lucky runners-up each get a copy of RoboCop 2: The Game. All you have to do is correctly answer these three easy questions, stick them on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope and send your entry to (ROBO)COP THAT!, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The first correct entry pulled out of the hat on the 28th of December wins its sender the kits. The next 10 out win their senders the software.

THE QUESTIONS

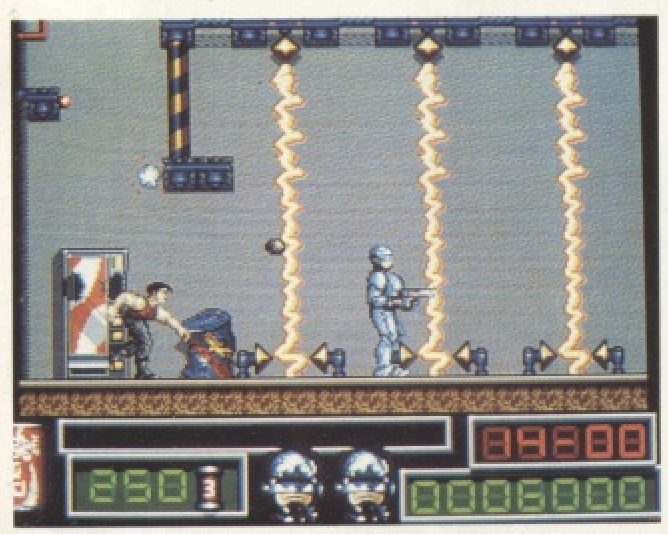
1) What is RoboCop's real name?
A) Alex Murphy
B) Alec O'Doyle
C) Axel O'Leary

2) Who directed RoboCop 2?
A) Paul Verhoeven
B) Irvin Kershner
C) David Soul

3) In which city is RoboCop 2 set?
A) Manchester
B) London
C) Detroit

YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to remain silent. The Editor's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. If you give up the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. Employees of EMAP, Ocean, Special FX and OCP, their friends and relatives are not allowed to enter. You have the right to have an attorney present during questioning. That is all.



ON EVERY LEVEL there are some particularly nasty obstacles to negotiate. These Electron Beams on Level Three crush your Coke can (Robo's energy indicator) faster than you can say 'Peace Officer', while mechanical crunching machines kill Robo with a single stroke!



GETTING FROM one part of a level to another often means playing this hoverboard section. Robo must hover his way upwards, knocking out the turret-mounted baddies as he goes. In this section, the power-giving pickups are actually bad news, as they are the only things capable of knocking Robo off his hover platform.

A ISN'T LIFE A wild and crazy thing, eh? While RoboCop 2: The Movie is nowhere good as its predecessor, RoboCop 2; The Game is a massive improvement over *its* predecessor! This isn't anything to do with the film being any more suited to conversion (both movies have equal quantities of violent action) but Special FX's classy execution of the same predictable design. Like the original, there's nothing startlingly new about the gameplay, but the platform-based action that forms the main bulk of RoboCop 2 is a considerable improvement over that of its forerunner. For a start there's plenty of OTT bloodshed, with a never-ending army of scum to blow away, and the layout of the three main levels is impressively sprawling and maze-like. There's a lot more emphasis on the platform idea this time, with Robo often having to execute Miner Willy style jumps across chasms and conveyor belts in order to progress. The two inter-level bonus sections earn their keep admirably. Both are entertaining diversions from the 'norm', with the added bonus of playing a part in the overall objective (unlike the shooting range and photo-fit sections from the original RoboCop, where points were the only incentive to do well). The colourful and very stylish visuals add polish, along with some astounding sound in the form of a neat stereo remix of the film score and a plethora of atmospheric sampled effects. All this adds up to one slick adaptation that might have benefited from a some more thought at the design stage (some of the movie's more notable sequences have been ignored, such as Robo's bike chase with Cain), but remains top-notch entertainment nonetheless. Well worth a flutter, and destined to sell by the truckload.

ST SPECIAL FX is having this one produced out of house, and so there are definitely going to be some noticeable differences on the graphic and sound fronts. Gameplay however, should remain almost unaltered.



PC THERE ARE no plans as yet for a PC version of RoboCop 2. However, Ocean hasn't ruled out the idea completely, so we may well see something later next year.



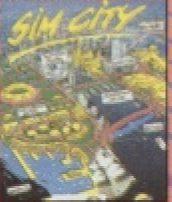
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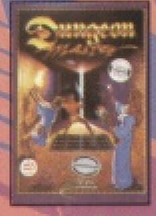
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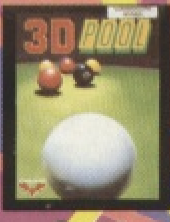
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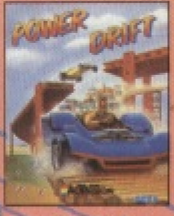
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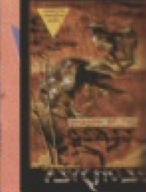
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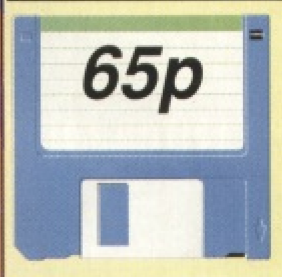
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Awesome

The programmers of Beast and Beast 2 have made the leap into space. Gordon Houghton discovered that it was worth the effort.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT for the Octarian planetary system. For centuries they have refused to trade with the militaristic Homikahns, so the Homikahns have finally flipped their lids and decided to blow the Octarians into the next universe. Their mad scientists have developed a super-weapon known as the Promethean cannon, which draws power from their sun. It needs time to charge up its batteries, but it won't be long before Octaria becomes space dust...

Into this conflict cruises the enhanceable Starship Elapidae and her crew, scouring the Galaxy in search of free meals, trading opportunities and large wads of dosh. Intelligence reports have informed them that Octaria is about to fry, and they are determined to extract as much cash as possible before it happens.

Their on-board computers reveal that there are eight planets in the system: all diverse and dangerous, but also potentially highly profitable. Swarms of aliens infest the planets, and there are rumours of giant Space Creatures that lurk off-world waiting for hapless pilots. However, fuel is likely to be the major problem - it's only available in exchange for fulfilling missions. On the other hand money (Diogem Disks) and Chrollum Crystals (for trading) are plentiful.



BEFORE THE interaction begins the Elapidae is en route to Aquoss, the watery central planet in the Octarian system. Unfortunately, the ship's Rotational Scrolling interplanetary hyperspace travels are constantly interrupted by such irritations as pirates, cargo convoys, space stations and asteroids. Pirates rely on numbers rather than strength, and yield items such as disks and energy cells, whereas Cargo and trader convoys are guarded by increasingly tough security forces, but the bounty is well worth the effort. Space stations are rare but hold surprises. And asteroids...

WHOLE FIELDS of asteroids bursting with Chrollum are regularly encountered - but if you want to collect the crystals, you need to buy mining lasers at the nearest trading point. As in that arcade classic Asteroids, shooting large rocks results in lots of smaller rocks. Collision with anything in deep space results in a loss of energy.

LEVIATHANS LIKE THESE don't lurk above every planet, but they can be dangerous opponents when they do appear. This duel is tackled in 3D by your landing-craft, after disengaging from the main body.

A FEW TASTY shots to the head or body send the monster straight back to serpent city without a suitcase, and leave you free to land on the world itself.



AWESOME THREESOME

AWESOME is Reflection's fourth baby after **Ballistix**, Beast and Beast 2. And, at around 3.5Mb of data it's definitely the team's biggest project yet. Not surprising then than it's taken two of the Newcastle-based threesome, Martin Edmondson and Cormac Batstone (Paul Howarth is the third partner) about one and a half years to write. But what prompted them to produce a space-based venture in the first place? Martin Edmondson: "I was sick and tired of doing trees and people running around with swords and I've always liked science fiction films like **Blade Runner** – we just felt like a change."

Among Awesome's most impressive technical achievements is the 3D snake in the Space Harrier style section. Martin explains how they did it: "It's so smooth because we programmed it differently from the way it was done, say, in Space Harrier. Most people just have five or so frames of different sizes which they move across the screen and that's what makes it jerky. Every time we moved the snake's position X or Y we also increased its size." Awesome's snake has 32 animation frames and runs at 25 frames per second. Most of it actually runs in 50 frames "but to do that all the way through would have made it too hard to play."

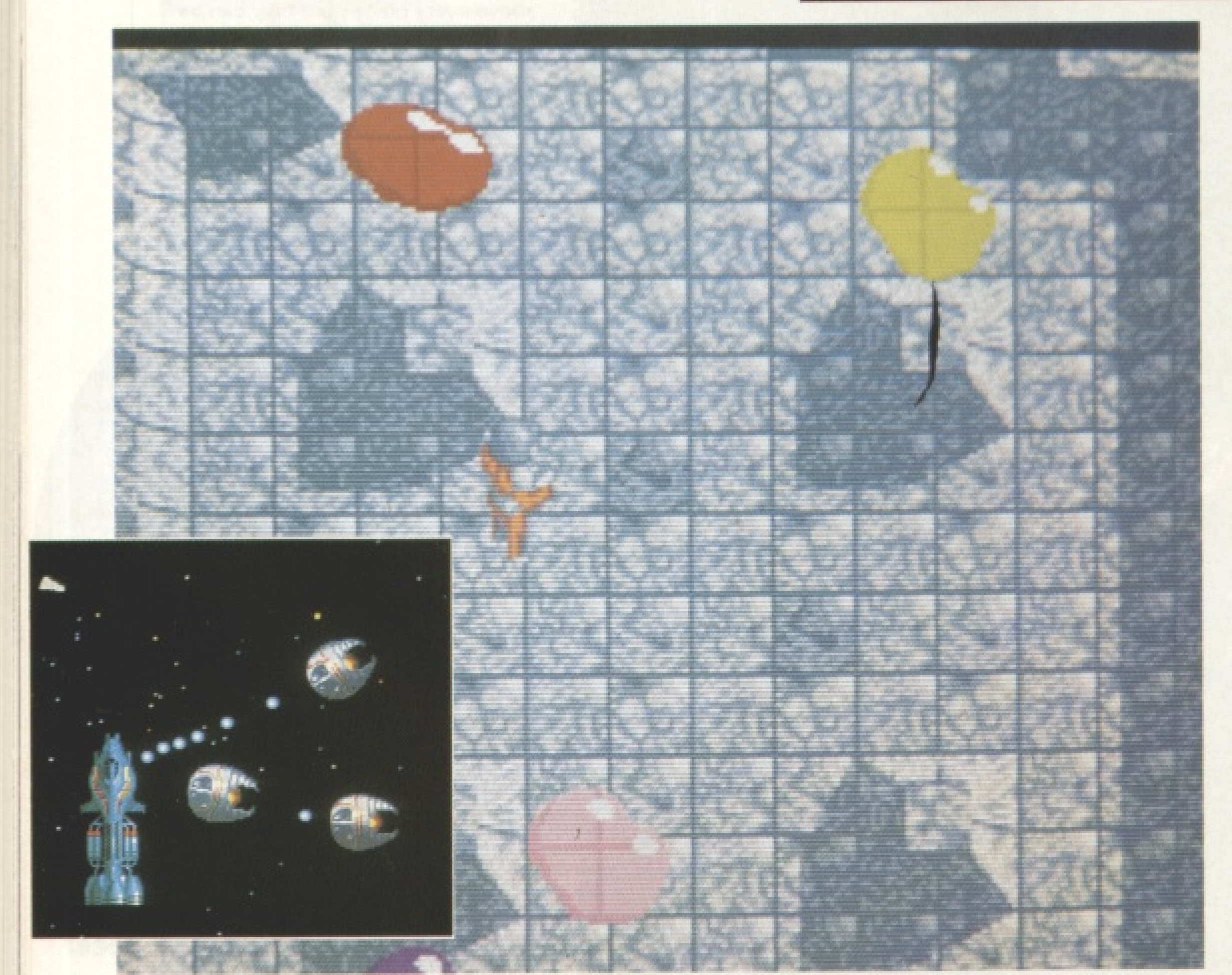
But the snake wasn't the trickiest part of the project as a whole. "It was the parallax section in the bit where you're skimming around the surface of the planet that was really time consuming. Everything else worked more or less first time but that took a lot of messing about to get right." The rotating space section ran a close second: "there was just such a lot of maths involved."



FLYING ABOVE the planet's surface allows you to gain extra oxygen by destroying alien craft. This is important, since when you do land you have to complete the journey to the trading and Navcom facilities on foot. The indigenous animal life doesn't take kindly to traders, and any contact with enemy life or weapons depletes oxygen levels. Annihilate the guardian at the entrance to the complex, and you can (at last) get down to some serious exchanging of goods.



ONCE INSIDE you can sell any cargo, and exchange crystals and disks for weapons. This is where Awesome starts getting tasty: among the hardware on offer are mining lasers, spherical bombs, a pulse laser, a flame thrower, mortar bolts, a wide-beam plasma cannon and a radial disruptor.



THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE is to escape from Octaria before it is destroyed, and the price of fuel makes planet hopping the only feasible way out of the system. Depending on the relative costs of fuel and hotel bills, you can either fly straight to the next planet or wait until the planetary alignment is more favourable. Available missions can determine your route for you.

A

AWESOME is a neat balance between trading and shoot 'em up elements, none of which are compelling enough on their own but which, as a collection, prove enjoyable. There are eight-way scrolling shoot 'em up sequences, a **Space Harrier** blaster, an overhead exploration romp, trading and navigation sections, and mini-missions within the overall objective. At the beginning it's tough (you only have one life), and that means there's plenty of annoying disk loading and swapping as you get to grips with the action. However, as with Beast 2 loading has been reduced by options to turn off the Game Over sequence and the music and sound effects. Awesome's difficulty is ultimately to its advantage: it draws you into a whole series of diverse action and leaves you wanting more - so you can't help having just another go. The trading and Navcom systems are particularly well designed and give purpose to the blasting sections - especially when you get hold of a couple of juicy weapons. Graphics and sound are well up to Reflections' usual high standard (the music is excellent), although some of the planetary sprites are bland and shapeless. What Awesome lacks in originality, it makes up for in variety and long-term playability. If you have the patience for a long and sometimes frustrating haul, you will be well rewarded.

ST

AWESOME, like all of Reflections' works, was developed primarily for the Amiga. However, if Beast is anything to go by, the ST Awesome (due next year) should be almost identical in content.

PC

NARY AN awesome peep nor an awesome pixel will find its way into caring DOS homes just yet.

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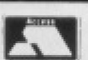
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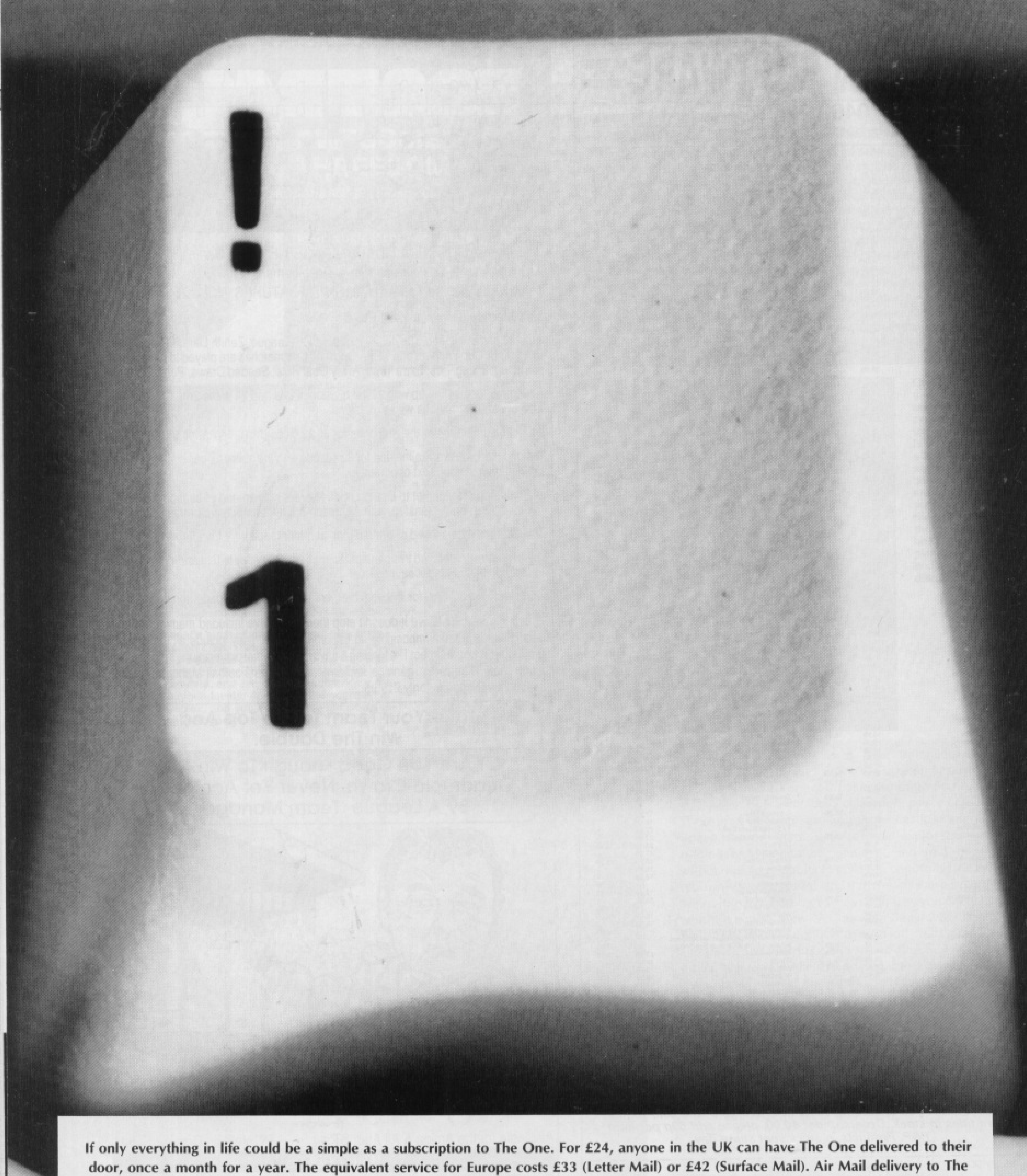
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MAXIS' FIRST 'SOFTWARE TOY' was **SimCity**, released during 1989. It was one of the two most original pieces of entertainment software released that year, and, like **Populous**, SimCity gives the player god-like powers.

The idea behind Software Toys is that, unlike most other forms of entertainment software, they are open-ended. There is no set objective as such. SimCity allows players to try their hands at running a city, either building one up from scratch or starting with a pre-set scenario. This involves manipulation of the many elements that affect the development of cities and also handling crises from fires to sea monsters.

SimEarth takes the basic principles behind SimCity and applies them to whole planets. Now you are given the opportunity to set yourself up as a deity and control the way each planet develops. This is achieved by using tools to adjust the Earth's four elements: the Lithosphere, Atmosphere, Hydrosphere, and Biosphere.

The SimEarth model is based on the Gaia Hypothesis, which was originated by eminent scientist James Lovelock. He believes that the Earth can be seen as a single organism that has generated a self-regulatory mechanism to ensure that life on the planet survives and continues to evolve.

A rather neat way of showing how you are doing is the Gaia window. This shows the planet's face changing state from absolute misery to complete bliss. Keep the window on screen and the eyes follow the pointer as it moves. It really is as if Mother Earth herself is watching you...

LIKE SIMCITY, SimEarth is tile based. Initially each tile shows the altitude of the land at that particular point, then water, plant life, and animal life. Event tiles are then overlaid on these. By clicking on the Data layer buttons on the panel to the left it's possible to strip away the layers you don't want to see and concentrate on particular aspects of the simulation. Additional information is added by selecting one of the Climate Overlay Buttons. These indicate climate-related variables ranging from temperature to rainfall.



ONE CHALLENGE worth taking up is that of terraforming. The objective is to take either Mars or Venus and change them from dead planets into successful life-bearing ones. To assist with this some special terraforming tools are available, including an ice meteor to create oceans.



PLANETARY POINTS

TEN THINGS you may not have known about the Earth...

The temperature at the centre of the Earth is about 10,000 degrees Centigrade. That's hotter than the surface of the sun.

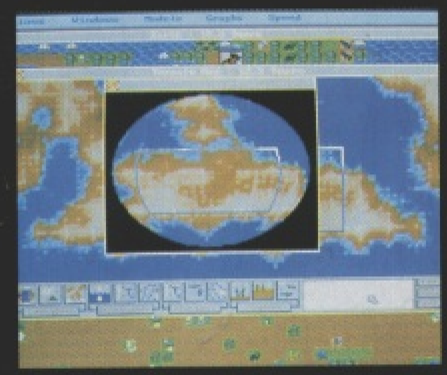
The Earth has a magnetic field, the poles of which correspond approximately to the Earth's rotational axes. Periodically the magnetic field reverses (that is North becomes South and vice versa). This last happened over a million years ago.

There are two types of tide: Lunar Tides (caused by the gravitational pull of the moon), and Solar Tides (caused by the gravitational pull of the sun). Lunar tides occur every six hours, while solar tides occur every 24 hours and are half as strong as lunar tides. The tides are strong enough to slow down the rotation of the Earth, lengthening the day by a very small amount (tides slow the Earth down by 0.00001 of a second every year).

Earth is the fifth largest planet in the solar system (it is 12,756 kilometers in diameter). It orbits at 93 million miles from the sun at a speed of 29.8 kilometres per second.

Of all the planet's in the solar system, Earth has the largest moon relative to its own size. In fact, it is so large that some astronomers have conjectured that the Earth is one component of a double planet system.

Between 1930 and the present day the human population of the Earth has more than doubled!



THE MAP WINDOW shows the whole planet at once, which is useful for observing widespread effects. The Edit rectangle shows which portion of the planet is currently being 'edited'. By clicking on the Globe button, a globe is displayed instead of a flat map.



ONE OF THE MOST USEFUL tools at your disposal is Examine. Switch this on and point to any tile in the Edit Window and it generates an information panel detailing the type of landscape, creatures, and weather at that point.

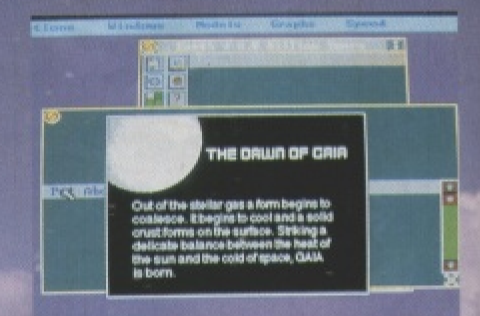
WITNESSING CREATION

ACCORDING to the bible, God made the Earth in six days flat and on the seventh day he took a breather (and why not?). Here's our 'day by day' guide to the creation of the world together with a slightly more conservative time-scale.

DAY ONE

The Formation Of The Planet
(4.7 Billion Years Ago)

A collection of dense gases and small chunks of matter (known as planetesimals) orbiting the newly formed star, Sol, were drawn together by gravitational forces to form planets. The third nearest to the sun was the Earth. Primordial Earth was molten, and the heavier compounds like molten iron were able to sink to the centre of the planet where they formed a core. Eventually the outer surface of the Earth became cool and solidified to form a crust.



DAY TWO

The Formation Of The Atmosphere And Oceans

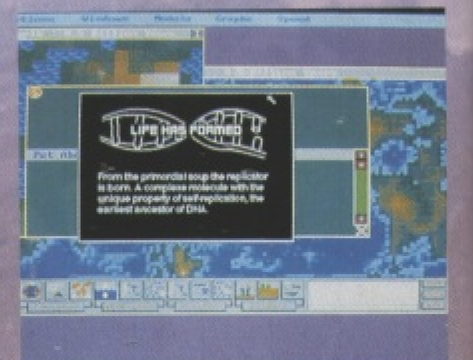
As it cools the Earth begins a period of rapid differentiation. The crust separates into lighter areas which become the continental crust, and denser areas, which become the oceanic crust. During this time gases escape from the interior of the planet in a process known as outgassing. The heavier gases condense to form the oceans while the lighter gases form the atmosphere.

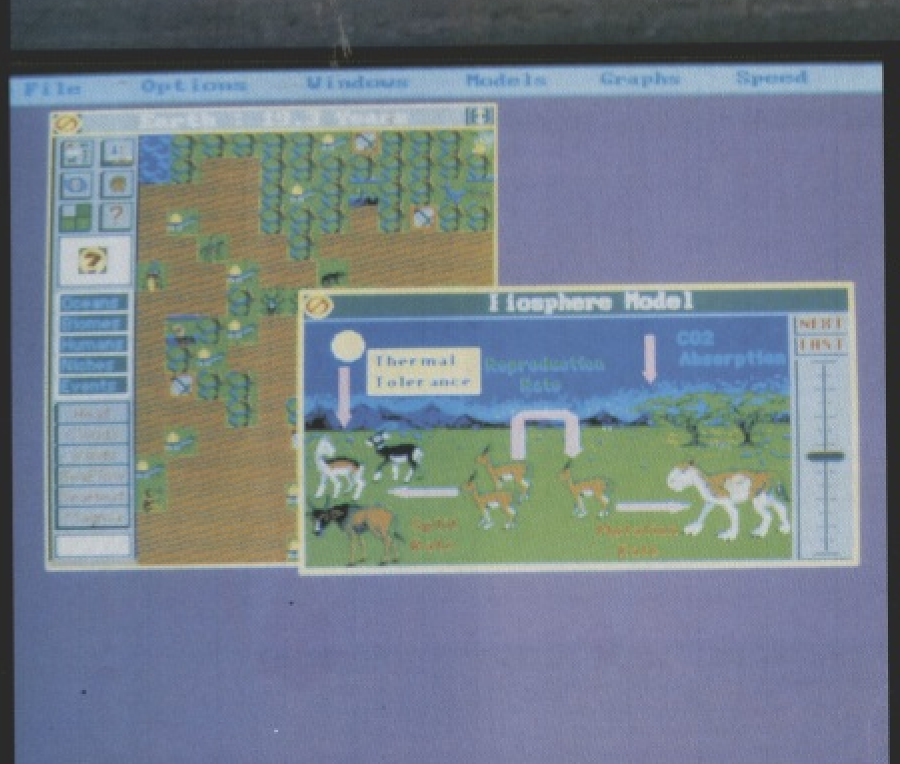


DAY THREE

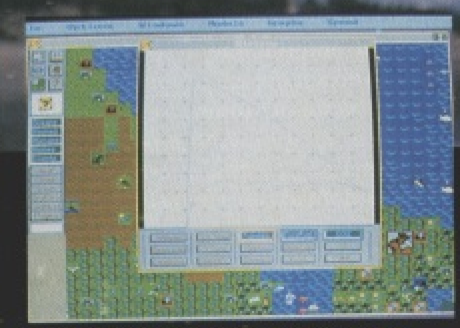
Life Evolves
(3.5 Billion Years Ago)

From the primordial soup, amino acids are formed, and these evolve into the first life form, Prokaryotes. These were primitive cells with no nucleus. They fed on Methane through the cell wall. It took another 2.5 billion years for the first cell with a nucleus to evolve. This was the eukaryotic cell. Shortly afterward the first multi-cellular lifeforms evolved. These were the metazoans. It was as this point that the planet's seas became a breeding ground for a wide diversity of life. Just six hundred million years ago the first shelled organisms evolved, and one hundred million years later the first marine vertebrates appeared. Now things were really starting to happen.

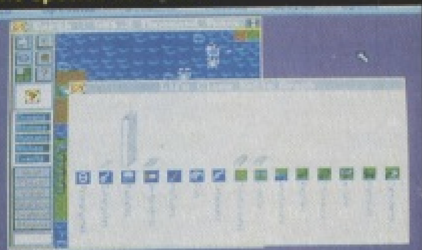




BY USING THESE MODELS it's possible to modify the actual rules which run the simulation. You could, for instance, create a planet in which the Greenhouse Effect does not occur (which should keep CFC manufacturers happy). Adjusting the models is, of course, an easy way of cheating, but it is also a useful way of simplifying the simulation so that you can concentrate on observing particular processes. Alternatively you might want to investigate what would happen in extreme circumstances.



THE LIFE FORM GRAPHS show which particular species is prevalent and which are suffering. You can then either let things run their course and see what happens, or intervene and try and keep the species balanced.



THE HISTORY WINDOW is useful for assessing how your planet is doing in particular departments. Clicking on any of the buttons at the bottom of the window results in a graph against time showing how that particular aspect has increased or decreased.

DAY FOUR
The Invasion Of Land
(435 Million Years Ago)
Day four is very important – something incredible happens. Plants began to develop sap-bearing systems that allowed them to survive without being underwater. Plant life began to creep onto the land and generate a living soil. The crossopterygians (fish with both gills and lungs: the first amphibians) appeared 40 million years later. As time goes on they become stronger and more adapted to life on land. Synapsida (the mammals) and Diapsida (the reptiles and dinosaurs) will eventually evolve from these.



DAY FIVE
Insect Life
Insect life appears and the Earth's ecology becomes even more complex. The insects evolved from the arthropods, soft-bodied lifeforms with exoskeletons. And they allow a new plant form to evolve: the Carniferns, carniverous plants that trap and feed from insects – the forerunners of the Venus Flytrap.

DAY SIX
Intelligent Life
(Two Million Years Ago)
The genus Homo Sapiens appears and learns to use tools and perform complex communication with his fellows. In his two million years of existence he learns to philosophise and question his own being, and even come up with the Gaia hypothesis.

DAY SEVEN
Gone Fishing
No wonder God needed a rest...

WIN A PLANET!

Thanks To Ocean

TO CELEBRATE the release of SimEarth, Ocean is giving you the chance to win a world to stick on your desk. All you have to do is correctly answer the three questions below, write your answers on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope (not forgetting your name and address), and send it to: GIVE A GAIA BREAK, The ONE, Priory Court, 3032 Farringdon Lane, London. EC1R 3AU. The first correct entry out of the bag wins its sender a handsome desktop globe and a copy of each of James Lovelock's books on the Gaia Hypotheses, **Gaia** and **The Ages of Gaia**. The next 10 correct entries drawn win their senders copies of the books.

THE QUESTIONS

1) Who originated the Gaia hypothesis?
A) Isaac Asimov
B) James Lovelock
C) William Golding

2) What was the name of the first lifeform?
A) Prokaryote
B) Eukaryote
C) Carnifern

3) How old is the Earth?
A) 450,000 years
B) 450 million years
C) 4.5 billion years

The Editor's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. Entries from employees of EMAP Images, Ocean and associated companies are invalid.

The surface of the Earth is actually made up of eight major sections known as plates. These are the IndoAustralian plate, the Pacific plate, the North American Plate, the Nazca Plate, the South American Plate, the African Plate, the Eurasian Plate, and the Antarctic Plate. The points at which these plates meet are known as faults. Because the plates are always moving, the areas around these faults are prone to Earthquakes. This is why California (which is situated on the San Andreas fault) is constantly experiencing earth tremors.

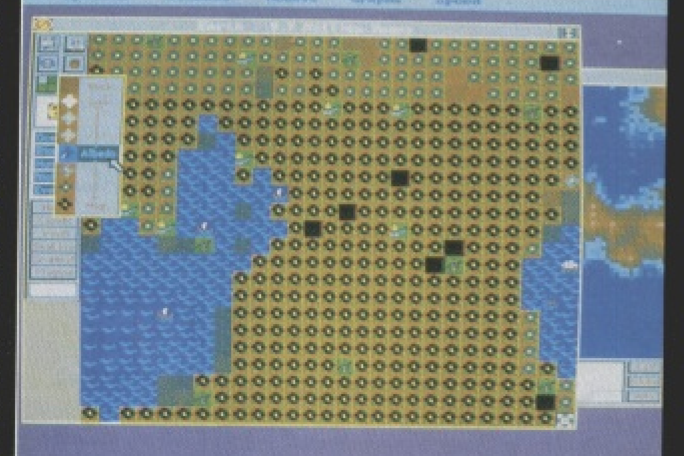
The Earth can be divided into four components. These are: the Lithosphere (the solid part of the Earth that forms the continents and ocean floor), the Hydrosphere (the liquid part of the planet), the Atmosphere (the gaseous part of the planet), and the Biosphere (the living part of the planet – ourselves, animals, and plants).

DAISYWORLD, DAISYWORLD, DEMONSTRATE GAIA DO!

ALTHOUGH you can generate your own planets from scratch there are also seven pre-set scenarios to play: Aquarium, Stag Nation, Earth (Cambrian Era), Earth (Modern Day), Mars, Venus, and Daisyworld. What? Yes, Daisyworld.

So that he could demonstrate the Gaia hypothesis, James Lovelock created an imaginary planet on which the continents are covered with daisies. The daisies range in colour from Black to White, the growth rate of which is dependent on temperature.

Below five degrees Centigrade the daisies won't grow, and above 40 degrees Centigrade they die. The optimum temperature for daisy growth is 22.5 degrees Centigrade. Like the heat from our own sun, Daisyworld's is constantly increasing. Let's see what happens.



As the mean temperature of the planet passes five degrees Centigrade, daisies begin to grow. Initially thedarker daisies are dominant because they are better at absorbing heat. As they spread they absorb even more heat and begin to warm the whole planet.

Soon the temperature begins to rise above 22.5 degrees Centigrade and the growth rate of the darker daisies slows down. But at the same time the lighter coloured daisies begin to take over. This is because they reflect more heat and remain cooler. As they spread they begin to reflect enough heat to cool the whole planet.

Soon the temperature falls below 22.5 degrees Centigrade and the darker daisies become more prominent again. And so the cycle goes on, keeping the temperature oscillating around 22.5 degrees Centigrade. This is an example of Gaia in action.

Of course, eventually the sun's output would be so strong that the self-regulatory process eventually breaks down and the daisies on daisyworld come to an end. Because there would then be no plant life to absorb the excess Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere, it would build up again causing a runaway Greenhouse Effect. Eventually the result would be an overheated planet like Venus – violent and utterly lifeless.
GARETH! PANEL! (one pic for each day except last)

The axis of the Earth's spin is actually tilted at an angle of about 23.5 degrees to the plane in which it orbits the sun. The direction in which the Earth's axis points is slowly changing direction. This is a process known as Precession.

The Earth has periodically been subject to mass extinctions. A mass extinction is classed as the loss of 70 per cent of the total lifeforms (or biomass) on the planet. The most famous mass extinction was that of the dinosaurs about 100 million years ago.

THE GAIA HYPOTHESIS

GAIA is an extraordinary, simple and beautiful way of looking at something apparently very complex: the evolution of the Earth. It sees the Earth as being a single organism in which the evolution of animal and plant life and the shaping of land, sea, and atmosphere are all tightly coupled processes. Events that affect one aspect of the Earth's evolution have a corresponding effect on all other aspects.

This remarkable view of our planet was originated by distinguished scientist James Lovelock 25 years ago. At the time he was working for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratories. Even in 1965 they were already planning unmanned space missions to Mars, and one of the most exciting aspects of that mission was Life Detection. James Lovelock was assigned to that very project.

He soon became aware that each scientist on the team was looking for life in terms of individual disciplines. A bacteriologist for instance, would want to set up an Earth type laboratory with Petri dishes for the collection of soil and growth of bacteria.

James Lovelock thought this was not a sensible way of going about their task. Life on Mars might be very different to the lifeforms we are familiar with on Earth. Also, the craft might land at a point on the planet that is devoid of life. This would be like an alien culture sending a crewless spacecraft to Earth and having it land in the Arctic. They might, wrongly, get the impression that Earth was a lifeless, frozen waste.

So he began to ask himself whether there was a foolproof way of identifying a planet that supported life. He came to the conclusion that any life would show up as a slowing down or reversal of Entropy (the measure of disorder in a natural system – most natural systems move from an highly active state to a stable inactive state).

One of the ways that life is evident on Earth is the composition of the atmosphere. There is a much higher concentration of Carbon Dioxide than there would be in a atmosphere that is not being breathed (and consequently changed) by lifeforms. James Lovelock proposed to NASA that they could determine whether there was life on Mars simply by analysing the atmosphere with an Infra-Red telescope. This was an unusual top-down approach to looking for life: an attempt to analyse the whole rather than the parts. It was this that led James Lovelock to apply a similar view to the Earth.

Looking at the Earth in this way uncovers some remarkable facts. The Earth's climate has remained stable and able to support life for millions of years, despite the sun's heat having risen by 25 per cent over that time. Howcan this be explained? Certainly not by trying to analyse the physical, chemical, and biological factors in isolation. But by considering the Earth as a whole – a single complex organism – it is easy to see how it regulates itself in much the same way as our own body temperature is regulated.

It was the novelist William Golding (author of **The Lord Of The Flies**) who attached the name 'Gaia' to James Lovelock's hypothesis. Gaia was the Ancient Greeks' way of expressing the concept of 'Mother Earth' and seems appropriate to the view of the planet taken by James Lovelock.

Could the Gaia hypothesis be extended beyond the Earth and applied to other planets – or even solar systems or the universe itself?

Recognising other systems comparable to our own is simply a matter of looking for the slowing down of entropy, just as James Lovelock proposed we look for life on Mars. Dead planets are more likely to have attained a more stable chemical state over their millions of years of existence whereas planets that support life show signs of unlikely chemical activity in their atmosphere, hydrosphere, and lithosphere.

According to James Lovelock, it would not be fair to apply the Gaia hypothesis to star systems, galaxies and the like, because although they may include individual life-bearing planets they are still moving as a whole towards states of equilibrium (this is entropy at work again).

Quantum physics states that, at a sub-atomic level, even a chemically stable universe is really a seething sea of energy with particles receiving and losing energy levels and even being created and destroyed. Some physicists have proposed that every event in the universe is linked to every other event in the universe via this cosmic web. Could it be that this process is what ultimately drives Gaia? "It's always very interesting to speculate like this," says James Lovelock, "but I have always been a practical scientist and I'm more interested in theories that we can directly apply now to the real world."

One of the most interesting aspects of Gaia is the role that we play. Does intelligent man aid the process, or is he but a spanner in the works? Man certainly does seem to fulfill a paradoxical role as part of this single organism. Sometimes he is like a cancer and other times he behaves like an antibody.

"I think there is a lot of hubris in the way we look at ourselves," exclaims James Lovelock. "We think we are far more important than we actually are. Of course we are damaging the environment and in doing so we are not safeguarding our own future. But nothing we do will upset Gaia in the long term. There will be higher lifeforms to succeed us. Perhaps, when the planet becomes too hot to support carbon-based life some form of silicon

We asked James Lovelock how he came to be involved in the SimEarth project: "Stewart Brand, the former editor of **Co-Evolution Quarterly**, is a friend of mine and lives near Will Wright of Maxis. When Will suggested doing SimEarth, Stewart recommended that Will contacted me, and he did."

James' function in the project was "to give advice. I particularly provided help with geophysical modelling. Attempts to model the Earth through single sciences such as biology or biochemistry fail because the models are oversensitive to initial conditions and prone to chaotic disturbance. Gaia models, where the biology and the geology are tightly coupled, are for some reason stable and able to resist perturbations."

"I don't think religion has anything to do with it. All Gaia is is another way of looking at life on Earth. It is a self-regulatory mechanism, that's all. Just like those we have in our homes – thermostats in ovens or central heating systems."

Do you think that computers can ever manage to simulate such a complex and variable system with any great degree of realism?

"Yes I do. I am amazed at how well SimEarth does considering that it is little more than a game."

Are there any other ways that we can observe and better understand the Gaia hypothesis in action?

"The other and essential way to understand the world is to observe it and see if the predictions from models such as these map onto the real world."

How well does SimEarth manage to encompass the many variables that are part of Gaia?

"That is up to the player to discover. Don't forget that SimEarth allows the user to manipulate the conditions and variables."

Have you ever been involved in any other computer simulations of natural processes on this scale?

"No, and nor has anyone else! The great climate models that use super computers look only at the atmosphere. Most of them don't even include clouds and none of them take into account the ocean or the biology."

PC THERE ARE A WHOLE HOST of options to allow this version to work with most configurations of the machine, but, as is more often than not the case, maximum benefit is obtained from having a bit of speed (80286 or better) and either an EGA or VGA card. As the simulation operates using a WIMP style system, a mouse is pretty much essential (it's worth spending the extra to buy one, just to play this simulation). A hard disk also comes in handy to avoid tedious disk accessing. The beauty of SimEarth is that you can have hours of fun experimenting with it before you even read a page of the manual. Then you can sit and absorb the informative (but far from amusing) manual and have hours of fun experimenting AND understanding what you are doing. This is not a program you are ever likely to relegate to the top shelf. Once you have played through all the pre-set scenarios provided there are near-infinite variations with which to experiment. Of course, SimEarth has tremendous educational possibilities, but it is also fun to use. It's gratifying to see that Maxis has taken its subject seriously without taking things too far (there are many neat touches, such as the inclusion of the black monoliths from **2001: A Space Odyssey**). Even if you don't agree with the Gaia Hypothesis, SimEarth has an enormous amount to offer when it comes to long-term stimulating entertainment.

ST DETAILS are scarce at present, but there is no reason why everything that is implemented on the PC version should not be available to Amiga owners. Obviously if you have a basic machine you are going to have to put up with a lot more disk accessing, but at least it's worth the wait.



FOR THIS ONE read as the Amiga. It's very doubtful that there will be any detrimental differences between the two versions.

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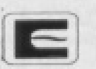
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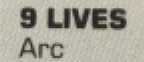
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9 Lives

Faced with cat-napping, cat-aclysm and cat-astrophe can Catty Hamza cope? Purr-fectly.

EN ROUTE TO THE evening caterwaul, Bob Cat's life falls apart. Claudette, flower among felines and queen among cats has been catnapped by the Mad Scientist. Bob doesn't even paws for thought. Nobody takes his bit of fluff without prior permission. He's going out there, he's going to find her and he's gonna bring that kitty back.

This is way too complex for a one-cat mission so Bob's first task is to get help from his friends. Six cat cousins are caged up on each of the four levels leading to the Mad Scientist's domain. It's Bob's job to locate them and find enough keys to set them free. The snag? There are hundreds of perilous platforms, crazy conveyors and poisonous pests in there.

So, will Bob wither in the face of catastrophe or will he battle against the odds, rescue his mates and save Claudette with just nine precious lives and his trusty ball of magic wool?

FORGET CLAWS and teeth - a cool cat travels nowhere without his ball of wool. It's durable, long-lasting and capable of stunning a whole cat-alogue of bad guys temporarily. And they come in all shapes and sizes - from tiny leaping crickets to huge barrel-lobbing Donkey Kong monkeys. Collisions are registered on the 'Healthmeter' to the right of the screen. The longer you touch, the faster it falls.

BOB DOESN'T JUMP the regular way. The height of a jump is determined by the 'Jumpometer' on the right. Pull back on the joystick until the meter reaches the required height, then release it to send Bob cat-apulting through the sky. The trick is judging the height correctly: too much thrust and he hits his head or overshoots the mark, too little and his paws fall short.



SOME BONZO in a white coat and glasses has left a truckload of cat treats round here. Milk, cakes, chicken and fish are high in protein and good sources of energy. Jewels and presents will make good gifts when you manage to locate Claudette. Potions and other such items have different bonus effects: invincibility, extra health, points and invisibility among them.



MAKE YOUR FRIENDS happy with a golden key. Rescued cats reward Bob with a brief wave or a cheesy grin and then leg it to search for Claudette.

9 LIVES
Arc

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SOUND	74%
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VALUE	82%

OVERALL 82%

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CAT FACTS

THERE ARE approximately 6,500,000 cats in the UK.

THE USA HAS approximately 54,600,000 cats.

THERE ARE 330 different breeds of cat. The Ragdoll is the largest and generally weighs between 15-20 lb. The smallest, at around 6lb is the Singapura. The largest UK cat ever recorded was a tabby weighing in at 44.5 lb.

THE ALL-TIME mousing record is held by Towser who killed an estimated 28,899 mice in 24 years.

THE OLDEST cat ever recorded died at the grand old age of 36.



BOB HATES WATER but for Claudette he will even get his whiskers wet. As soon as cat hits water, a handy helmet automatically appears along with a limited supply of air. Watch the cat-meter on the right: when it hits the bottom, Bob's out of bubbles.



BOB'S BREWS

9 LIVES features several potion pickups - though not every variety has a desirable effect. Here are a few to watch out for.

STRIPY POTION
Turns Bob stripy, causing temporary paralysis.



BLUE POTION
Increases stamina.



SPOTTY POTION
Turns Bob spotty, causing temporary paralysis.

YELLOW POTION
Turns Bob into a chicken, causing temporary paralysis.



WHITE POTION
Makes Bob choke.



BOB CATS

IT'S NOT EASY being a cat: Bob goes through a lot for Claudette. Here's a selection of his best contortions.



RUNNING



SWIMMING



FALLING



JUMPING



AIRBORNE



TEMPORARILY INVISIBLE



DEAD

SMOKING
(AND SUFFERING THE INEVITABLE ILL-EFFECTS)



WITH A PAIR of magic wings, any cat with a tail can defy the laws of aerodynamics. Flying is less hassle than jumping but even with a magic chopper it doesn't last long. Make sure you are positioned well for an emergency landing.



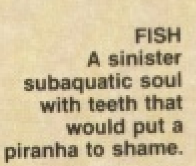
A CAT CAN LOOK at a king but if the cat's in invisi-Bob mode the king can't look back. Invisible save for his head, enemies fail to note our feline friend at all. Its only disadvantage is that you can't see where you are jumping.

BOB'S BAD BOYS

THE MAD SCIENTIST'S world is swarming with enemies. Here's a selection of its most common inhabitants.



RABBIT
This hare-brained lepus puts the boot in.



FISH
A sinister subaquatic soul with teeth that would put a piranha to shame.



RAT
Vermin is vermin, and no friend of felines. A cudgel makes it less cute than it looks.

OWL
These come in two forms: wise or mad. Neither is pleasant.



CRICKET
This spinning insect can be very irritating if you don't catch it quickly.



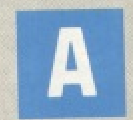
DOG
As every cat knows, dogs are thick. A quick flick of the wool ball is all it takes.



NO MATTER how terrible the hardship, how horrific the ordeal, somehow a cat's true love can't help but win through. Claudette's a reward in herself but Bob gets a sportscar thrown in. It comes with a cat-alytic converter - naturally.

ST

9 LIVES isn't a licensed product but it's what all those mediocre cartoon 'conversions' (**Tom And Jerry**, **Garfield**, **Snoopy**) should have been. It's got all the cartoon essentials: cute animation, comic-book artwork and bags of visual gimmickry. Add to that a sophisticated network of conveyors, ledges, spikes and underwater channels, and you have an exciting platform game which guarantees hours of absorbing fun. Admittedly, the unusual jumping controls do take a bit of getting used to and moving about can be a tad awkward at first, but half an hour's patient practice early on adds up to lots of entertainment later. All that's missing are a few well-chosen sound effects: Bob's animated antics are crying out for the odd sampled bang, crash and miaow. However, 9 Lives sports a suitably comic soundtrack, is addictive, silly and well-designed.



AN AMIGA version, claws and all, should be in the shops as you read this.



BAD NEWS for PC cat-lovers. You won't cat-ch Bob on your machine.

Champion of the Raj™

THE JEWEL OF THE EAST IS STAINED WITH BLOOD

India at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. The Emperor's grip is weakening. All over the country rival factions bid for power.

This is your chance to change the course of history. Take the role of any one of the six contenders for the Empire and prepare to make India your own. Capture opposing states, grapple with brutal riots, stage lavish processions to impress your rivals and counter assassination attempts.

- Spectacular scenery, rich native colours and exotic animated sequences.
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PROJECT
The First Samurai

PUBLISHER
Vivid Image Development And ImageWorks

AUTHOR
Vivid Image Development
Raffaele 'The Italian Stallion' Cecco (Programming)
Dokk (Graphics)
John Twiddy (Map Editor, Publisher)
Mev Dinc (Project Manager, Publisher)

INITIATED
July 1990

RELEASE

AMIGA
September 1991

ATARI ST
September 1991

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
N/A

Turning Japanese

Kati Hamza is rewarded with samurai execution.

"I WAS WATCHING **Them!** on TV," explains VID's graphic artist, Dokk, "when I just started talking about samurai. At the time we were in the middle of designing another game but we weren't very happy with it. That's when it hit us."

From random thoughts great designs emerge. When Dokk sat down with Mev Dinc and John Twiddy – head honchos of Vivid Image Development, creators of **The Last Ninja** (8-bit), **Hammerfist** and **Time Machine** – in the company's Watford office, they decided the samurai concept was exactly what they were looking for.

"We wanted something fairly mystical so that we could put in lots of special effects. Samurai also have a very strong sense of honour – that fitted in with our plot."

And honour is what it's all about. For you, a highly trained samurai bodyguard, the murder of your ancient Japanese lord is the ultimate disgrace. Under normal circumstances immediate hara kiri would be the only honourable way out, but this crime is different. The moustache twiddling perpetrator is no ordinary Japanese villain but a megalomaniac demon who laughs in the face of goodness, tweaks the nose of respectability and makes his escape by warping through time. Before the body was cold you snatched up your magic sword and swore on your master's beard to travel into the future, battle through four death-defying levels, and sort out that double-crossing demon.

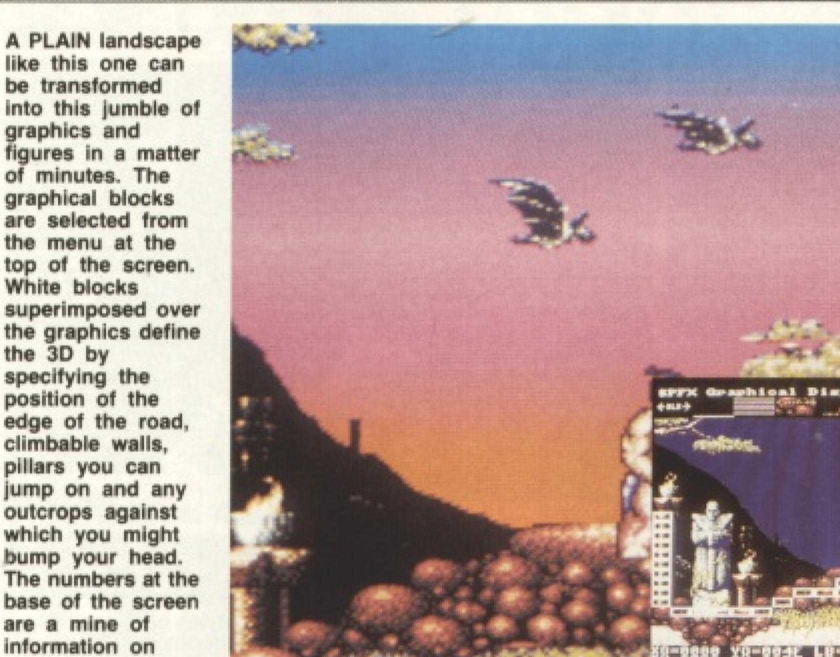
They called it **The First Samurai** (the 'pun' on **The Last Ninja**, by the way, is purely coincidental) and as Dokk (whose previous work includes **Vendetta**, **Dominator** and **BMX Kidz**) began designing the graphics, Vivid Image discussed who should program it. That's where Raffaele Cecco came in.

"I'd just converted Time Machine for Vivid Image on the Spectrum and Amstrad and they asked me would I do this. I was looking for a 16-bit project to do at the time but everybody kept offering me 8-bit stuff because I'd done so much of it before. Then I saw Dokk's graphic sequences and thought, 'I'll have some of those'."

The admiration was mutual. Mev Dinc: "We wanted Raf to do it because he's not only a very good programmer, he also comes up with lots of really good ideas. If I suggest one thing, he usually comes back with three."

Development so far has been an ongoing creative process in which everyone is encouraged to participate. "Deciding on sprites and backgrounds that everybody is happy with can be time-consuming. We don't argue, we just have constructive discussions."

What they don't need to discuss is their determination to make The First Samurai a tad more special than your average hack 'n' slay romp. User-friendly controls are a top priority: "You have to be able to pick up the joystick and just play the game." The First Samurai comes with a variety of different fighting movements but there's no need to sit down and learn them before you play. As John Twiddy explains: "The main thing is to get lots of manoeuvres in there. They're all



A PLAIN landscape like this one can be transformed into this jumble of graphics and figures in a matter of minutes. The graphical blocks are selected from the menu at the top of the screen. White blocks superimposed over the graphics define the 3D by specifying the position of the edge of the road, climbable walls, pillars you can jump on and any outcrops against which you might bump your head. The numbers at the base of the screen are a mine of information on current block positions. "For the ST conversion we have to pre-shift all the blocks. We need to know how many there are so we can calculate them in advance; the editor automatically keeps track of all the different types of blocks on screen." It also allows you to define points to trigger happenings, a rock fall or an alien appearance for example. The figure 200 on the right is the code for a bat – 201 would be a flame.

VIVID IMAGE PRESENTS THE FIRST SAMURAI © VIVID IMAGE 1990

FOR AN INTRODUCTORY sequence, VID is taking the ever more trendy cinematic approach. The final version won't just feature lavish graphical effects like this, it will also give a movie-style flashback of preceding events. This isn't just cosmetics: VID is convinced that a good introduction adds to the atmosphere.

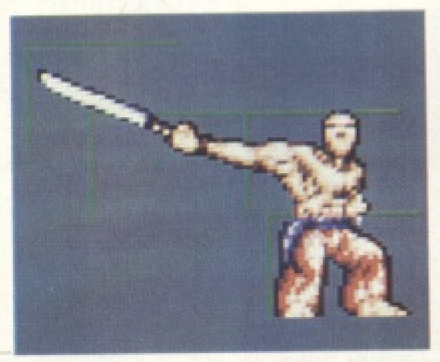


SPLITTING the main character up into separate limb and torso sprites isn't just more memory efficient, it also means that the number of potential movement sequences is practically unlimited. While our hero's arm is slashing you can make him stand on one leg, bend his knees or turn his head around. An added advantage is that humanoid enemies don't have to be designed from scratch, you simply use he same limbs and stick on a different head.



THE ART OF NOISE

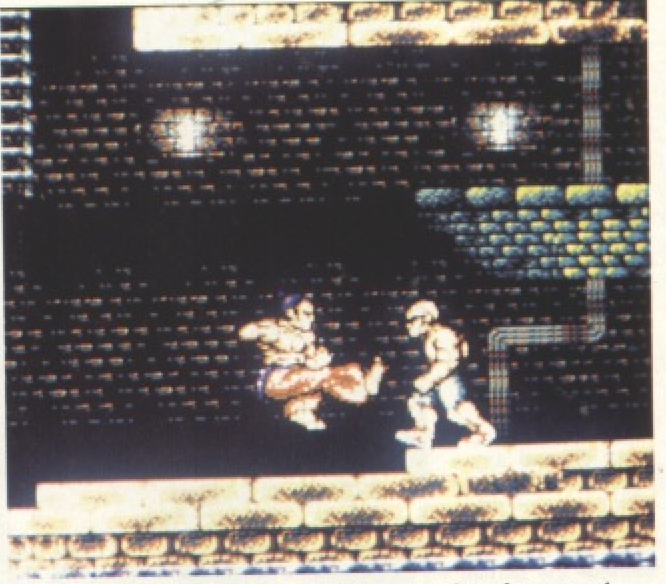
A COMPLEX musical score complete with in-game warblings is one feature The First Samurai is highly unlikely to have. A full soundtrack isn't specific enough and eats up memory. Instead VID has something more subtle in mind, preferably eerie, atmospheric sound effects with delicate crescendos as you approach features like running water or reach a crisis point. Exactly who's going to create this series of sonic masterpiece hasn't been decided yet.



A FRAME from a sprite animation demonstration which displays our samurai hero's potential movements one by one. In addition to a series of unarmed fighting manoeuvres there's the potential to collect enough magic to use that marvellous magical sword.

TECHNOPORN

SPEED: The First Samurai runs at 25 frames per second. "We decided not to go for 50 frames because it's got too many limitations. You can't have huge areas of sprites and animation if you want that kind of speed."
DATA: It's far too early to say how much data the game will take up – "a lot" is the nearest guess.
SPRITES: There are 105 different limb sprites, which currently build up to about 30 or so different movement sequences.
HARDWARE: Raf uses a 386 PC and PDS*.



CURRENT PLANS allow for two different styles of opponent. Killing a humanoid such as this one wins bonus points and handy pickups. Smashing tougher, more mystical enemies endows you with mystical powers. Exactly what kind of confrontation will round off each level hasn't been finalised yet: "it could be a mega-baddy or it could be something else. Either way, it's bound to be spectacular."



TAKE A LONG look at this screen because chances are you won't see much of it in the final product. The sewer background is almost definitely being dropped and even the future of Dokk's spectacular cascading water sprite hangs in the balance because it uses up far too much memory, almost as much as the main sprite itself.



THE TEAM HAS researched its material well. This piece of oriental calligraphy is genuine Japanese for 'samurai'. However, an interesting fact for trivia fans is that historically no samurai could ever be first. According to Japanese tradition, all samurai warriors are equal.

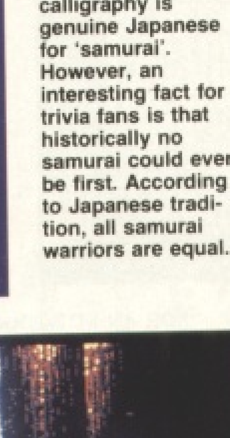
effective so ultimately you don't actually need to know how you've done each one."

There's no need to sacrifice visual impact to easy-to-handle controls: "In some arcade games, when your opponent's in a certain position you end up grabbing them and throwing them over your shoulder. It looks you're doing something very spectacular but in fact it's the computer showing standard joystick moves in different ways on screen. That's a feature we'd like to include."

The First Samurai definitely won't be one of those games that restricts you to walking in one direction. The aim is to get you experimenting, leaping about and exploring your environment, so there's a plethora of rocks to climb on, platforms to jump off and ledges to land on. One option under discussion involves more complex search and map factors on Level Three.

Three sub-games are included for variety's sake. As you are whizzed into the future on some form of fast-moving transport, a train, or a lift for example, you leap from point to point, negotiate traps and avoid treacherous obstacles (as yet unknown).

Another major VID innovation is a direct trade-off between kicking ass and watching your back. Approaching the demon's tower, your rudimentary knowledge of magic is boosted by power-ups. The simplest way to exploit them is to charge up your magic sword or release your karma in the form of a fireball. The strategic alternative involves charging up a trans-portation pod further along your route. Next time you die, there's no need to fight your way through familiar enemies again – you restart from that spot.



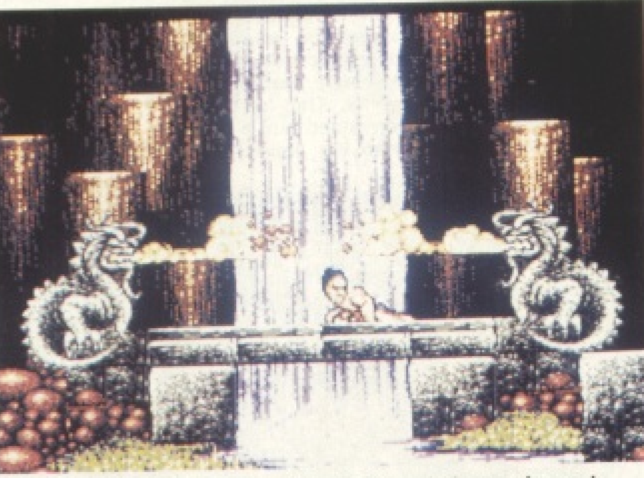
* PDS stands for Programmer's Development System. Created by Fruad Katon, it is the most widely used development tool for professional entertainment software programmers. The system runs on an IBM PC or compatible which is linked to the target machine, and allows programs to be monitored and altered in real time. The code can also be written on the PC and then downloaded to the target machine.

Though Raf's CV consists of a list of Spectrum and Amstrad titles as long as your arm (**Equinox, Exolon, Cybernoid, Stormlord, Solomon's Key**) The First Samurai is his first project on 16-bit, specifically the Amiga. Inevitably, most of the two months in which he's been involved in the project been taken up with getting used to the machine: "Obviously I couldn't use any old sprite handling or scrolling routines because I didn't have any. I've had to start everything from scratch."

There's plenty of time for him to get the hang of it: The First Samurai isn't due to be released for another nine months. VID deliberately opted for a fairly long development period: "We want to make certain there's plenty of time at the end for tweaking. This is the sort of game where it all comes down to how many enemies there are and where they're positioned." The final version will have had all its levels extensively tested one by one.

Meanwhile, VID has various other projects up its sleeve, though what, how and why is something the team's not prepared to reveal at this delicate stage of negotiation. Some dabbling with a 16-bit console (we're not sure which one") may also be on the horizon, though nothing's settled yet. As for Raf, it doesn't look like he's going back to the Spectrum: "I'm enjoying 16-bit too much."

DOKK'S LANDSCAPE designs emphasise the old and the new. Waterfalls and bridges are reminiscent of ancient Japan. Strange modern effects like these bizarre, spinning pillars aim for the more futuristic look.



A MORE RECENT example of the first level shows pleasant countryside instead of stinking sewers. From here our valiant samurai travels into two increasingly technical levels of cityscape. Level Four returns to ancient Japan and a confrontation with the great master-murdering demon himself.

JOHN TWIDDY AND HIS AMAZING DELUXE MAP EDITOR

FOR MAXIMUM flexibility in background design, John Twiddy has put together an all-singing, all-dancing map editor which runs concurrently with Deluxe Paint. This clever little utility allows you to load in graphics, select, position and animate background blocks, as well as define their depth relative to other objects. So far, the bulk of development has involved perfecting the editor's features. It's an ongoing process, as Dokk explains: "Whenever we want a new feature we simply phone John up and ask him to include it."



THE CREATIVE genius behind The First Samurai, outside Vivid Image Development's Watford base: Mev Dinc, John Twiddy, Raf Cecco and Dokk.

4 FOOTBALL FANATICS

4 GREAT GAMES

SOCCER MANIA

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Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.

PROJECT
Midwinter II

PUBLISHER
MicroProse

AUTHOR
Maelstrom
Mike Singleton (Design, Maths)
Val Franco (In-Game Personnel)
Dave Gautrey (Graphics)
George Williamson (Character Design, Conversation Screens)
Dave Ollman (Strategy)
Hugh Batterbury (Producer)
Bruce Butterfield, Andy Elkerton (Programming)

INITIATED
April 1990

RELEASE

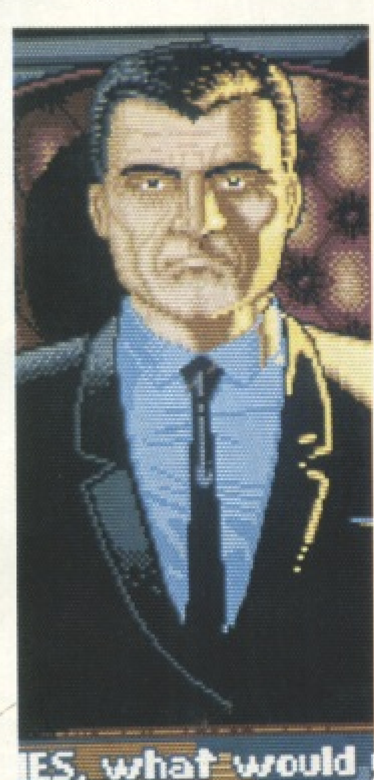
AMIGA
March 1991

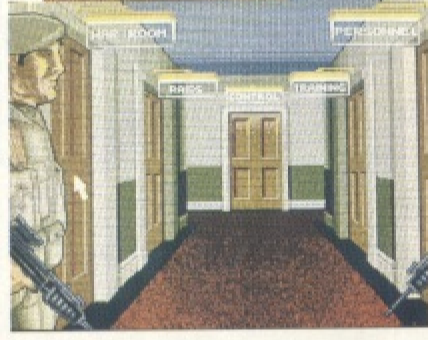
ATARI ST
March 1991

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES
March 1991

Reviving The

The world of Midwinter is getting warmer as a sequel approaches, and it's snow joke. Gordon Houghton thaw-t he'd dig up the details.





THE FIRST SCREEN you see is this, and it affords many more options than Midwinter. The War Room is the place to execute all disk operations. In Personnel you can modify your hero or heroine, while Training gives you the opportunity to try out different modes of transport on your home island, or sample a mission, or plan strategies. Raids allows you to attempt individual missions, and Control is where you tackle an entire campaign.

THE STORY SO FAR... In 2039 a rogue meteorite struck the earth head on, causing widespread global cooling and lowering the sea-level. In 2060 a colony of survivors established a crude society on Midwinter island using basic technology. In 2099 a threat to their freedom was posed by the dictatorial schemes of the evil General Masters. A resistance movement was formed, led by Captain John Stark.

In **Midwinter II** it's now several decades later, and both Masters and Stark have left the scene. The world is beginning to thaw, and the sea-levels are rising again. Exploration parties heading south have discovered a new archipelagos of 42 islands off the coast of Africa. They colonised one of the largest, named it Agora (Greek for market place/forum), and settled down. Then the trouble started...

The sequel is a territorial contest between the Atlantic Federation (that's you) and the Saharan Empire. Because of climatic changes, the Sahara is now a green and pleasant land, and its people have become insatiably acquisitive. They are threatening to launch an armada pretty pronto, and unless you acquire enough islands to thwart them, your civilisation could be wiped out before it begins.

This is the most fundamental change in gameplay between Midwinters: the switch from a single island to a cluster of 42. Hugh Batterbury, Midwinter II's 'Producer', explains: "One of the problems in Midwinter is that the island itself is too big - playing for a few hours at a time can be more of a hassle than an intrigue. A number of different islands means more variety, and a greater total land area to explore."

The idea for the island group emerged as Mike Singleton looked closely at ways of improving the action of the original: "Midwinter could be too much of a long slog. One of our programmers finished it in

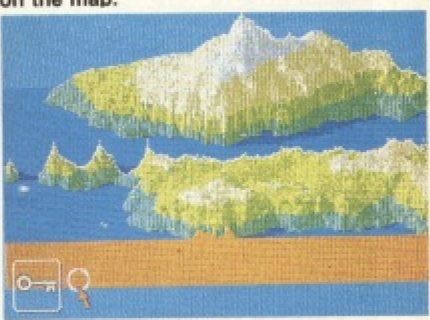
THESE ARE THE 42 islands of Midwinter II displayed on the fractally-rendered main map. Agora is the land mass at the top left, and is actually based on the Cape Verde islands. The team has combined the two Midwinter map-modes (Relief and Coloured Contour) and has added shadows on the sea to give an idea of an island's shape. The boys have also attempted to recreate a GEM-style environment, so that the map is full-screen at all times, and you can zoom in on any spot with up to 64 times magnification (Midwinter had 32 times). But the fun doesn't end there, because masses of information is just the click of a mouse button away.



HOWEVER, THIS IS probably the most useful map mode, since it gives access to detailed vital information. For example, that scorpion insignia and the red dot indicate the location of a unit of the Saharan Empire. Information is initially restricted, but you can glean further details from characters and from encounters. An additional information window reveals the contents of any village on the map.



BEFORE ANY CAMPAIGN, you can plan your strategy in advance – it cuts out the hassle of experimentation. You are able to simulate capturing any of the islands in any order or combination, before forcing the enemy to launch its armada (which always takes the line of least resistance). It's well worth spending some time with this screen, since it could save you a lot of time and effort. For example, if islands are cut off from enemy supply lines they liberate themselves: you don't necessarily have to capture all 41 islands to win...



IF THAT'S NOT enough, you can access an exaggerated isometric viewpoint, which gives you a cross-section of any point on the map, so that you have a rough idea of the type of terrain you face. For trivia fans, the two islands shown here are Sikasso (foreground) and Dhafra (background).

GRAPHICS

THE BASIC 3D routines created for Midwinter have been slightly speeded up for its sequel. The program is currently having to scan 400 faces at once because the terrain is irregular: if it was totally flat, fewer calculations would be necessary. In addition, all the scenes and objects have more complicated vectors and greater detail - for example, there are 120 faces on the helicopter alone. The role of the graphics has changed subtly, as Mike Singleton observes: "The solid graphics environment is the main link between everything that goes on in the game."

The fractal techniques used in the maps have also been modified to accommodate the larger area and new colours: in essence, they have been crammed into smaller memory space and run at higher speeds. Maelstrom has designed its own landscape creator to facilitate map design: "It was written in a couple of days, used for a couple of days, and it won't be used again until Midwinter III."

Cold War



AND THERE'S MORE... You can also toggle a flat political map, which reveals the name and political orientation of every island at any time. It also points out the enemy strongholds (three of them indicated with light green shading), as well as shipping routes and supply lines. If you like, you can plot an automatic route from where you are to anywhere else on the map – just bear in mind that travel takes time. You can follow the route in solid graphics, taking pot shots or admiring the scenery, or just go straight to your destination.



FOR EXAMPLE, how about a relief-map of the sea-bed? It's vital if you navigate a submarine...

under an hour in training mode, but it usually takes nine to 10 hours to complete. People prefer something that can let you have a quick blast as well as a deeper challenge."

The structure of Midwinter II has been adapted accordingly - you can play it as 41 individual missions, or as a campaign. The missions are island-based, with a skull notation indicating difficulty: if you want to play for half an hour, pick a small island (one skull). If you fancy an all-nighter, opt to liberate one of the five-skull enemy outposts.

Each mission can include up to a dozen objectives, selected from six basic types: Assassinate, Rescue, Enlist Help, Seize Vital Documents, Destroy Enemy Unit, or Sabotage Building. In turn, each of these could involve sub-missions - key individuals might make additional demands before helping you. You pick up information and get to know each island's social structure as you go along. Free an island and you are rewarded with a couple of gifts: mundane items such as toasters (score is kept in dollars), and items useful to later missions, such as extra weaponry.

There are no time deadlines on individual missions, but if you play a campaign, you



THE VEHICLE SETUP utility is where the parameters are set for each of the 22 vehicles. It allows the programmers to toggle the different axes of movement, set the turning speed and acceleration, and define the effect of contact with the ground - everything that you'd need to distinguish a submarine from a zeppelin. Mike explains the beauty of it: "We don't have to write an individual program for each vehicle."

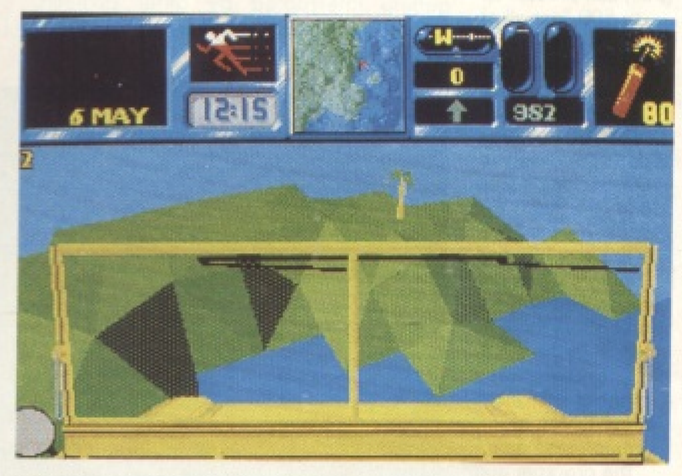
need to be swift. For the first six months you concentrate on freeing enemy islands. After that, the Saharan armada sets sail for your stronghold. If the enemy reaches your capital city on Agora, it has won.

The mission structure isn't the only major difference between the original and the sequel: Midwinter's basic quartet of vehicles has been replaced by a current 22 modes of transport - "and there may be more". Out go the skis, snow-buggies and hang-gliders, and in come vehicles more suited to the warmer climate: jeeps, ships, submarines, zeppelins, rocket packs, parachutes, spy planes, balloons, hovercraft, jet skis, buses, trucks, tanks, as well as walking and swimming. This is partly due to the vastly different terrain used throughout from flat plains to huge craters in extinct volcanoes.

However, much of Midwinter has been retained: you still have to stop and rest after injury and exhaustion, you need help to fulfill tasks, and you need transport to get around. Every aspect of the original has been enhanced, from increased complexity in the landscapes (250,000 square miles compared to Midwinter's 160,000, andd four times as many pixels), to a greater variety of encounters. There are even ▶



THE MAJOR DIFFERENCE between Midwinters in terms of 3D environment is the absence of snow. Down in the warming tropics, the terrain is lush and verdant – there are even a few palm trees. However, you still encounter vast cliffs, rough ground, and even some strange aquatic scenes. Vehicles are distinguished by a relevant graphic overlay – in this case, a jeep. There's also a wide variety of weaponry, from hand-helds (sub-machine guns, pistols, grenades, bazookas) to vehicle-specific armoury (air-to-air missiles, tank guns, and so on). The display panel at the top is constant, and contains a radar, muscle power indicator, 24-hour clock, mini-map, compass, speedometer, turnometer, artificial horizon, altimeter, fuel and weapons indicator.



A FLYING JEEP? No - this is still the jeep overlay, but it has been given the qualities of a helicopter by altering its parameters on the vehicle setup screen. You can travel anywhere as long as you have the right type of vehicle.



MIDWINTER II also features a night-time mode, including a half-hour sunrise and sunset sequence. Maelstrom is making great claims for the PC version, which will run in VGA... The one major omission at the moment is the 'misty distance' effect – that's going to come later, as Mike Singleton points out: "Looking at this without the misty distance, you can see why we put it in."

TECHNOPORN

FRAME RATE... Although it's only running at six frames per second right now, Maelstrom is looking to increase the speed. Mike Singleton elucidates: "It depends on the direction you're looking, but the average is six frames. On the finished product we'd be pleased with a top rate of 10 frames, with six in more complex scenes."

POLYGONS... The number of polygons on screen at any time varies, again according to the viewpoint: "obviously, if you're looking at the sky, there aren't any." An average of 200 polygons are displayed at once, but the program can process up to 500 "not all of which will be displayed, but all of which have to be calculated."

DATA... The three disks use a combination of compressed and raw data: "the major work is done on the graphics and sound, which are compressed at a ratio of about three to one – so the 400K of compressed graphics amount to about 1.5Mb of uncompressed data." The program and mission disks don't feature such hefty compression, but do contain another 1Mb. In total, there's probably about 2.5Mb across all three disks - although Maelstrom is keen to point out that it's not finished yet, and more may be added!

special icons activated at key moment throughout - for example, in the rig situations you can jump from one vehicle t another!

So how is Maelstrom managing to fit it all in? Well, three disks help: a Master Disk, which contains the program, a Mission Disk containing all the islands, and the Graphics Disk, which sits in the computer for most of the time. Hugh Batterbury explains the rest: "Midwinter took about nine months from scratch. When Midwinter II came around we'd already developed the routines, and there was much greater scope to design and explore."

The team is already thinking about **Midwinter III**, as Mike Singleton points out: "We haven't planned it, but we've mentioned the idea, and I certainly think we ought to do it." However, a Midwinter scenario creator based on the utilities Maelstrom is currently using isn't likely: "a lot of the game design would be too tedious."

The more immediate future holds **Starlord**, which is based on an old PBM game written by Mike in the early '80s - "it was probably the first PBM game in Britain." It's a 3D space combat epic in which you can control anything from single ships to whole fleets, and it's been underway for some considerable time: "it keeps getting interrupted by other projects." MicroProse will publish it, probably sometime next year. ●



MEETING CHARACTERS is one of the major parts of the action. Having seen only the barest details about them, you have to decide whether or not to talk, and whether to use charm or force. If they cooperate, they could offer help in the form of a mystery trip to a leader, forged documents, weapons, vehicles, contact with other people, or shelter from the enemy. But beware - some characters help more than others, and some are traitors who turn you over to the secret police.



MIDWINTER HAD 32 characters, its sequel has 1500, each with a different portrait. The major difference is that this time you control only one person, and interact with the rest. Before the adventure begins proper you choose your name and sex, and set up your own portrait, altering the style and colour of haircut, eyes, mouth, nose, lips and the shape of the face. Once set, this face appears in miniature throughout the game, on objects such as passes. As Mike points out: "It's fun to play even on its own - and you can get some pretty good likenesses!"



IN ADDITION TO the face, you also set your character's psychological make-up from eight character traits. So, for example, you might want to increase your bribing skills, or improve your sex appeal. However, to keep a balanced character, increasing one attributes decreases others. You can also change aspects of the physique, such as stamina, recuperation and endurance. These skills are all enhanced by practice during play.

SOUND

SOUND WILL BE a combination of sampled effects and music. The music will be more prevalent on the Amiga than the ST, but even then will only be used "at appropriate points during the game." The sampled effects only make use of a couple of channels, but include a bubbly subaquatic scuba-diver and a rhythmic helicopter effect. Compressed data is replayed directly, as Mike explains: "the greater the compression, the faster the sample." Other noises (such as bangs) will use the sound chip.



MAELSTROM was formed five years ago and, as Hugh Batterbury comments, it "was probably the first specialised development team around." The Midwinter squad is (from left to right, standing): Bruce Butterfield, Mike Singleton, Dave Gautrey, Hugh Batterbury, Andy Elkerton, George Williamson, and (seated) Dave Ollman and Val Franco.

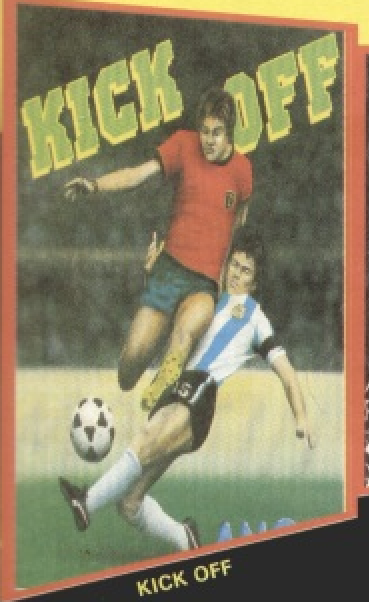
SET OF SIMULATIONS all versions

Amateurs, run for cover!

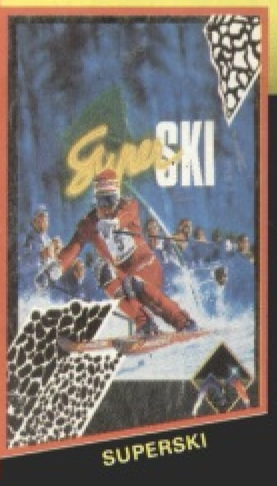
WATCH OUT!

CHALLENGERS

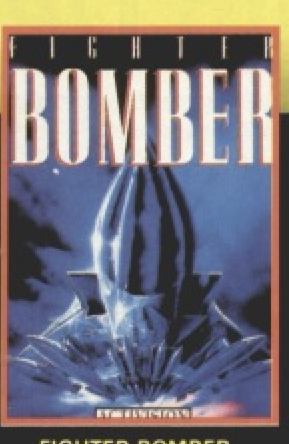
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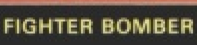


KICK OFF

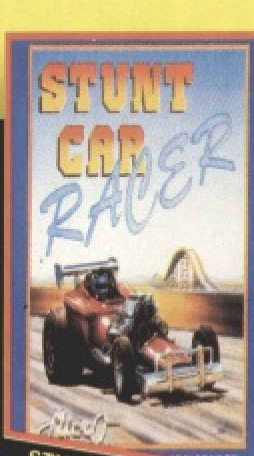


SUPERSKI

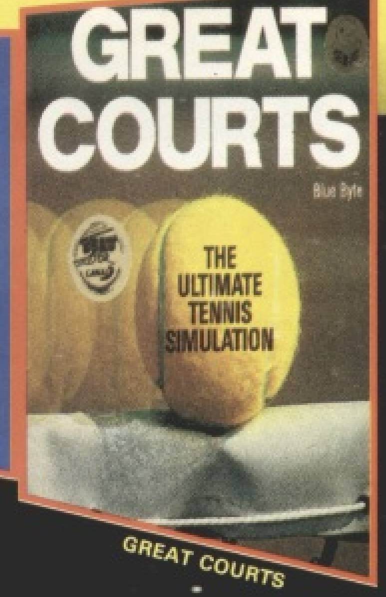




FIGHTER BOMBER



STUNT CAR RACER

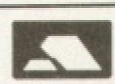


GREAT COURTS

Available on ATARI ST, AMIGA, IBM PC and compatibles, COMMODORE 64, SPECTRUM and AMSTRAD CPC.
NOTE 1! KICK OFF is not avaible in the PC version.
NOTE 2! In the SPECTRUM version STUNT CAR RACER and SUPERSKI are replaced by CARRIER COMMAND, P 47 and RICK DANGEROUS.

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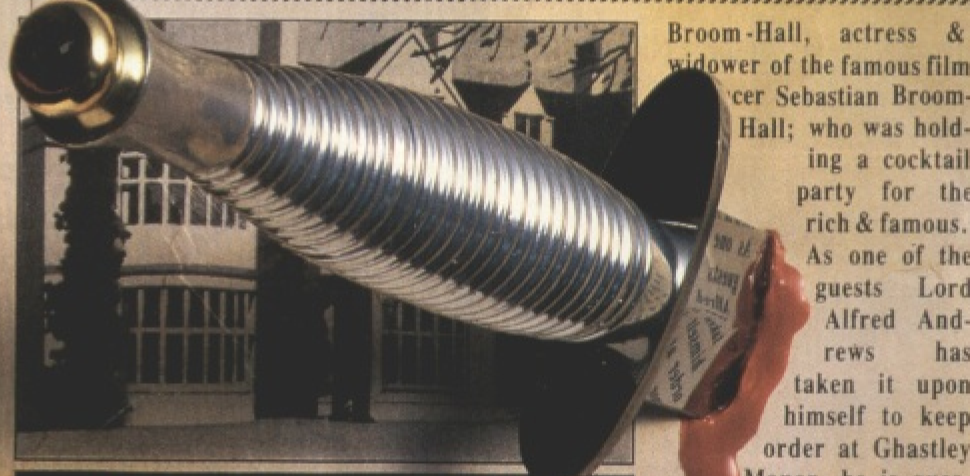
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WE SET THE SCENE ... NOW YOU SOLVE THE ...

MURDER!

19TH JUNE 1941



'GHASTLEY MANOR' THE LOCATION OF HORRIFYING HOMICIDE

Police have today been informed of the murder of Mr Charles Innes, aged 46, an attorney from Barrington, W. Sussex.
It is believed Mr Innes was stabbed to death at the home of Mrs Audrey Broom-Hall, actress & widower of the famous film ...cer Sebastian Broom-Hall; who was holding a cocktail party for the rich & famous.
As one of the guests Lord Alfred Andrews has taken it upon himself to keep order at Ghastley Manor, he is ques-...ing Mr Larry Glover, th... rominent political fi-g... & Dr Victor Jones: N... Scotland Yard have y... reach the scene of the c..., but they are esti-m...d to arrive at approx. 1... – 2 hours after the cr... was discovered.



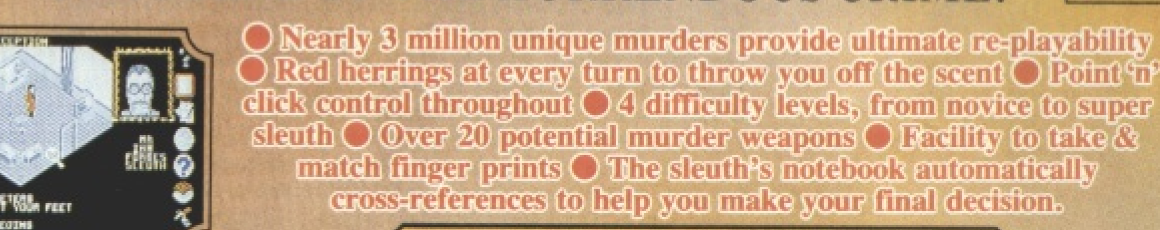
DISTINGUISHED PEER HAS 2 HOURS TO FIND THE KILLER...!

Lord Alfred Andrews has only 2 hours to try and solve the murder of Mr Charles Innes who was attending a cocktail party at 'Ghastley Manor'.
He reports, "Things are not quite as I initially thought. The guests are entwined with love affairs, disputes over inheritance & outbursts of jealous rage."
Investigations continue.

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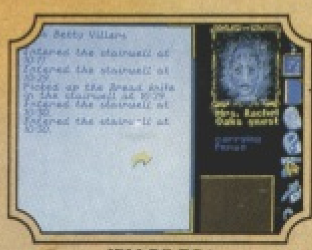


THE SCENE OF THE HORRENDOUS CRIME!



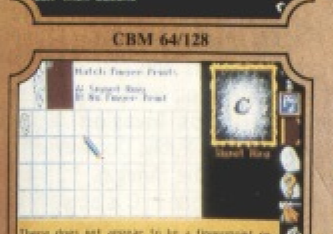
● Nearly 3 million unique murders provide ultimate re-playability ● Red herrings at every turn to throw you off the scent ● Point 'n' click control throughout ● 4 difficulty levels, from novice to super sleuth ● Over 20 potential murder weapons ● Facility to take & match finger prints ● The sleuth's notebook automatically cross-references to help you make your final decision.

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Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computer's specifications.

C'MON PEOPLE!

Get moving and send us your pictures, music, animations and the like. Each month we print whatever takes our fancy, so make 'em good or entertaining or both and the space is yours... The address, as ever, is DEMOS, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Don't forget to send a stamped addressed jiffy bag if you want your disks returned.

AND HERE'S WHERE TO GET THIS MONTH'S STUFF...

ATARI ST

The Demo Club Catalogue Disk and all other Demo Club wares are available from (surprise surprise) the Demo Club, 23 Alma Place, Spilsby, Lincs PE23 5LB. Tel: (0790) 53741.

AMIGA

The Digital Concert comes from Demon Software, Harbledown, Westland Green, Little Hadham, Herts SG11 2AQ. Ghost Pool and Spigot can be obtained from ADS, 7 Park Crescent, Worthing, East Sussex BN11 4AH. Tel: (0903) 210279. The Goldfire megademo was sent directly to us by the authors, but they say it is available from Start Computer Systems, Barbican House, Bonnersfield, Sunderland SR6 0AA. Tel: (091) 564 1400 (EXT 206). Total Recall was sent to us directly by Pendle Europa, but is also available from Diamond PD, 21 Bettiscombe Close, Canford Park, Poole, Dorset BH17 9DH.

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

Both Captain Comic and Triclops Invasion are available from PDSL, Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1UL. Tel: (0892) 663298.



GHOSTLY goings-on in 'poltergeist' pool.

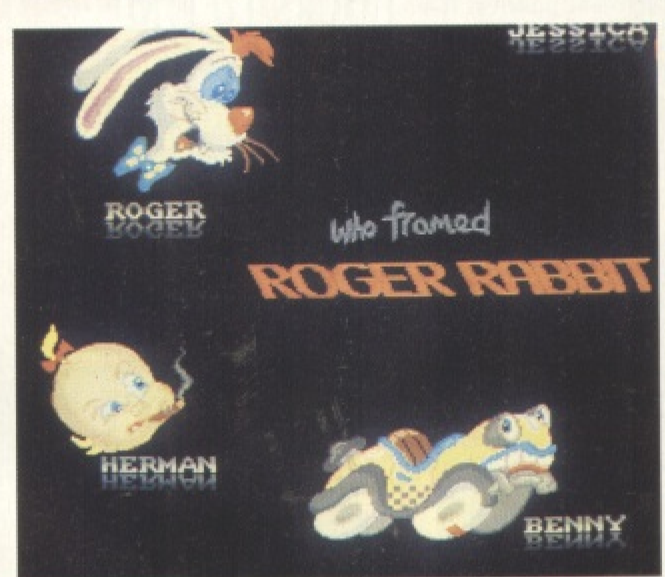


AND A FINAL burst of 'Turtle' Recall before we blast the green geeks into space forever.

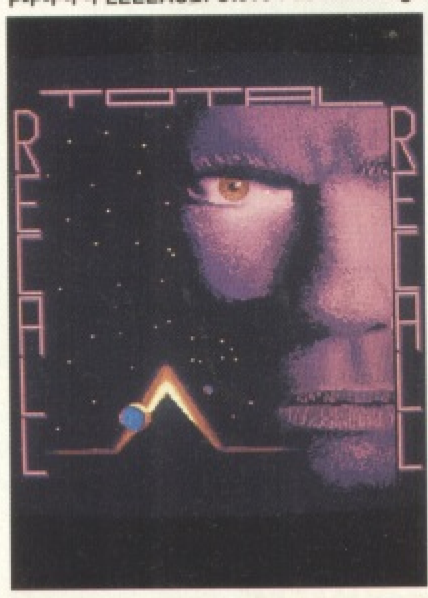
RAPPING with Recall, totally... "G-G-G-ET ready f-f-for a surprise... surprise..."

LIGHTS GOIN' OUT AND A KICK IN THE...

Phil South shakes it all about and does the Hokey Cokey with what turns around in the Public Domain.



P-P-P-P-PLEEEASE! Steve Packer's Roger Rabbit.



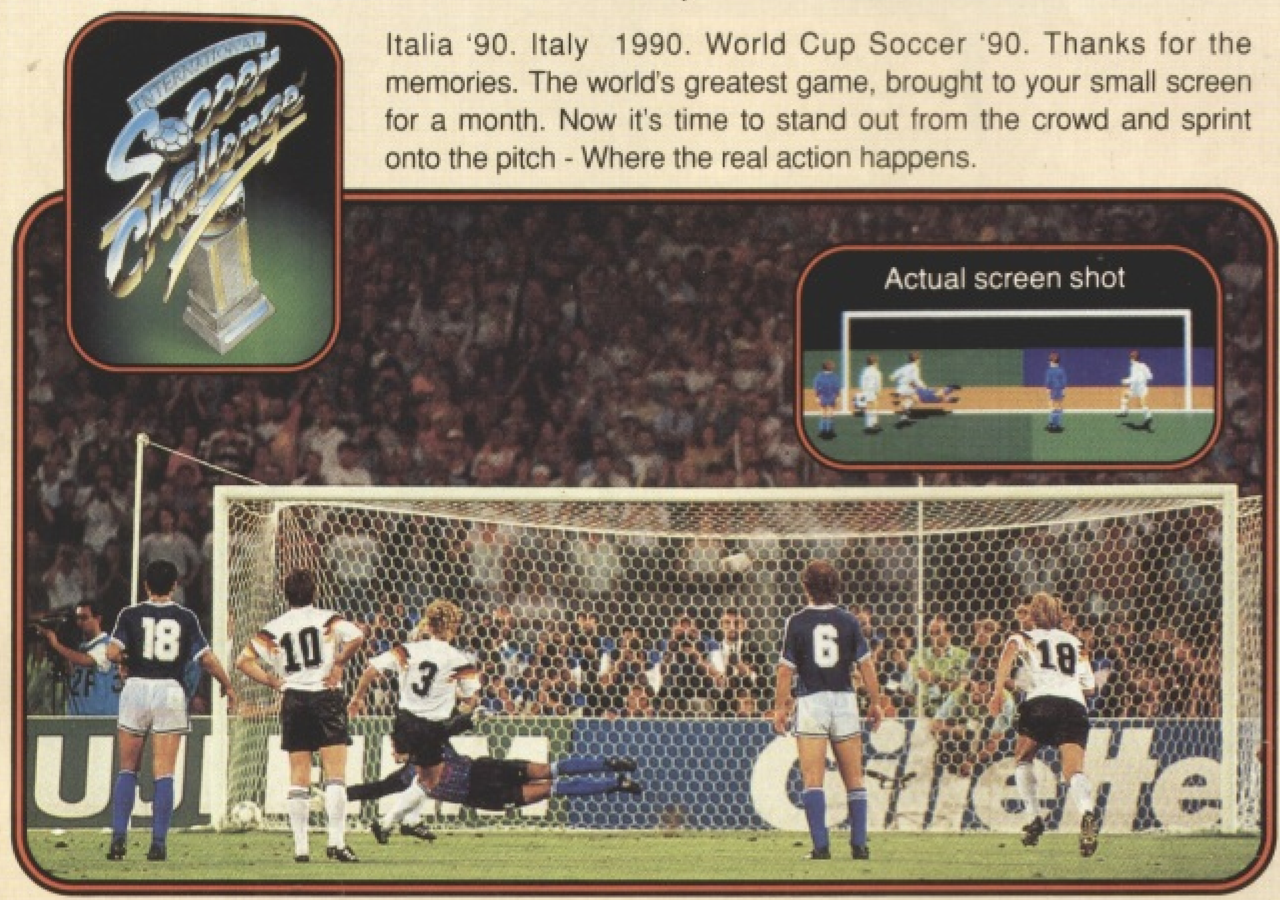
HAVING BEEN a bit thin on the ground recently, Atari ST demos are now pouring in (hooray!). Most of the really good ones came from the Demo Club, including its dead neat **Demo Club Catalogue** disk. This professional piece of work includes free textual and graphic blending intros, one each by SYNC and AXEL, plus a pair by the Replicants. Let's hope the boys can keep it up for the next few months... On the Amiga front, Steve Packer impresses with some peachy graphics. His swell slideshow collection features **Roger Rabbit** and Steve's own versions of 'famous' graphics, such as the **Power Drift** cars. Sound-wise we have a quality display in the form of **Digital Concert VI** by Flash. It's a clever piece of music, and very nicely mixed too, with a lot of proper stereo handling going on. That's not easy to do well, so full marks to old Flasher. From Amiga Digitising Service comes a duo of Dr Gandalf's ray-traced animations, one entitled **Ghost Pool** and the other called **Spigot**. Ghost Pool is a lengthy animation of a ghostly pool cue clearing the table. Hurricane Higgins eat your heart out. Spigot is pleasantly rendered animation of a bowl and a tap. The bowl has the Amiga logo on the bottom, and drops of water ripple the water – a totally brilliant effect! **Goldfire Megademo** is the first megademo from a new British crew based in Bedford. There's lots of smart stuff here, such as bubbles over a rocky horizon, a well-hard picture of Big Brother from **1984**, NewTek style lips as music metres, and a swish **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** 'sequence'. It's all well worth having. Fave rave this month though, is the super-slick **Total Recall** demo from Pendle Europa. It's a great slideshow with a good soundtrack containing a lot of samples from the movie. Heaven only knows where the team got all the digitised stills and sounds from. The quote about sticking the thing up your nose is here, although fortunately the horrible grinding noise when Arnie does isn't. The bit when he's in a mechanical disguise is used too, although unfortunately it's not animated. A big tick for an entertaining sequence, guys... After being a bit quiet lately, the PC scene has livened up again. **Captain Comic** is a brand new version of the famous graphic adventure, this time featuring new options and considerably less bugs. If you haven't played this game before then get it. **Triclops Invasion** is another example of a brilliant Public Domain game (it's also available on the Amiga). Interestingly enough the source code in C is actually on the disk, so clever people can fiddle with it!



THE COMPETITION'S OVER AND HERE'S THE WINNER

Andreas Brehme scores the winner, World Cup Final, July 1990. MicroStyle introduce the winner, Autumn 1990.

Italia '90. Italy 1990. World Cup Soccer '90. Thanks for the memories. The world's greatest game, brought to your small screen for a month. Now it's time to stand out from the crowd and sprint onto the pitch - Where the real action happens.



Tackle hard for the ball, deep in your own half, and send an inch-perfect pass wide to the winger. As he takes on the full-back, you're sprinting down the middle, screaming for the return.

The ball swings across, high above the defence, as you stretch your legs to their limit. One bounce and you let fly with your boot as the goal looms before you, sending the ball fizzing towards the top corner...

International Soccer Challenge is viewed from the players' perspective at pitch level, giving you fast-flowing three-dimensional action that you control as you wish.

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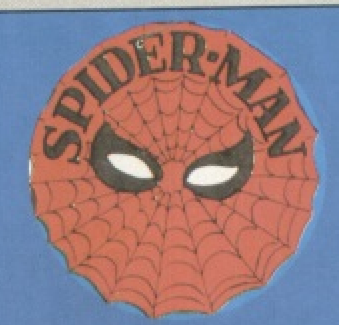
- Take charge of intricate set-piece moves from throw-ins, corners and free-kicks.

- Play in the World Cup Finals or as a member of the top sixteen Club sides from around the globe. International football as it is played for real.

- International Soccer Challenge. It will make Gascoigne weep with joy, get Marradonna excited, and have Hullit tearing his hair out.

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INTERNATIONAL SOCCER CHALLENGE FROM MICROSTYLE - IT'S A WHOLE DIFFERENT BALL GAME !



The Amazing Spider-Man is one of the oldest super-powered swingers in town. Phil South opens his arachno-file to look at ol' webhead's life to date, taking in the wall-crawler's new software venture along the way.

THE KING OF TH

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN made his debut in 1962 in Issue 15 of **Amazing Fantasy**. This was an anthology comic, a test-bed for new comic styles, and Spider-Man was one the most successful strips to spin off from this title.

In **Amazing Spider-Man** Number One we were told about Spidey's origins, how science student Peter Parker was bitten by a radioactive spider and how he invented his costume and web slingers. It also showed how he became a crime fighter after his Uncle Ben was killed by a burglar (copies of this magazine sell for about £1000 at present).

Issue Two featured the first Spider-Man super villain, The Vulture, and Spidey's first ever battle high above the street around the tops of the New York skyscrapers. The Vulture was a bald man with wings, and a typical Stan Lee off-beat villain. The next super villain to cross Spidey's web was the Sandman in Issue Four. He was a mob hitman, whose body could turn to soft sand or hard stone. This was very nearly Spider-Man's last issue, as Sandman smothered him with sand and nearly defeated him.

Issue Six of ASM saw Spidey take on The Lizard (currently knocking 'em dead in a new Spidey magazine which is apparently selling in the millions), a former scientist turned into a sort of human alligator by an accident in his lab (a common origin story in comics to this day!).

One of the foes people remember most vividly is Electro, who crackled along in Issue Nine. He was a man who after being struck by lightning discovered he could throw electricity around. Another classic Stan Lee creation, in his lightning-covered blue and yellow suit.

A more important meeting for Spidey was with Harry Osbourne and Gwen Stacey (who was originally groomed by Stan Lee to become Mrs Parker one day). Harry and Gwen's fates would both be sealed when the Green Goblin came onto the scene...

Although at first seeming not too significant, the first meeting with Betty next door's pushy daughter Mary Jane (in ASM Issue 42) was later to be of great importance.

The Kingpin, one of creator Stan Lee's favourite foes came into the Marvel universe in Issue 50, although it was revealed that he had been working behind the scenes of crime in New York for some time.

Issues 96-98 were a special anti-drug series, and are quite rare. This was one of the first times that 'real' issues were treated in a comic-book, and marked the beginnings of Spidey being portrayed as the first 'real life' superhero.

Disaster struck in issue 121 when Gwen Stacey was killed by the Green Goblin, Harry Osbourne's alter ego. To make this still worse, in issue 122 the Green Goblin gets his and Spidey finds out it was Harry all along. This was a sad period for Spidey and he didn't get over it for some time.

In Issue 252 Spidey made himself a new all black costume. This led us into the 'Secret Wars' where Spidey's costume was replaced by an alien which took its shape. (Incidentally, very few superheroes of Spidey's vintage are allowed by the readers to change their costumes for long periods. When Superman did the same, for example, the readers rebelled and the costume went back to normal).

But this phase didn't last long, and as soon as Issue 259, Spidey was back in his old suit and free of the alien overalls to boot (this being would come back to haunt him later).

After meeting Mary Jane again in Amazing Spider-Man, ol' webhead fell in love, and in true rapid comic-book style the pair were soon married in a special wedding edition of the Amazing Spider-Man Annual Number 21. In real life the two were 'wed' by Stan Lee at Shea Stadium at the time the comic came out Spider-Man's still swinging in the Amazing Spider-Man, available from all leading book stores. His earlier adventures can be found bound in Marvel Masterworks Volumes One and Five. Things haven't changed that greatly since his formative years. When he's not hanging from a web high above the streets, he's still getting hung up about his private life. It's reassuring to know that even superheroes are human!

Many thanks to all at Forbidden Planet, New Oxford Street, London (071 379 6042) for their help in assembling this collection of Spidey's historic moments.



"FREAK! PUBLIC MENACE! Believe it or not, these are some of the more flattering descriptions Spider-Man received when he first made his appearance. Originally content with being a circus attraction, Spider-Man's decision to fight crime came about following the murder of his Uncle Ben. The killer was a petty criminal that Spider-Man had previously allowed to get away. Riddled with angst, the teenager took to the streets and rooftops.





MILD-MANNERED Peter Parker, professional wallflower turned professional wall-crawler following his being bitten by a radioactive spider at a science exhibition. Now Parker possesses the proportionate strength, speed and agility of a spider. This made his job as freelance photographer for the Daily Bugle a little easier.



J JONAH JAMESON, publisher of the Daily Bugle, was not one of Spider-Man's biggest fans as he continually declared him a danger to the public. Little did Jonah know that he was in fact persecuting the alter ego of one of his own employees!

SPIDEY SPIN-OFFS

THERE HAVE BEEN many, ranging from pyjamas to action figures. To date there have been three Spider-Man movies, all looking cheap and cheerful and starring Nicholas Hammond as Peter Parker and his arachnoid alter ego. Let's hope that the forthcoming effort won't be so poor... The animated television series on the other hand was marginally more impressive. It ran for 52 episodes, each of 22 minutes in length. They were made between 1967 and 1968 by Grantray-Lawrence Animation, who were also responsible for bringing to life on the small screen other Marvel superheroes such as The Mighty Thor and The Fantastic Four. But how well can you remember the theme tune's laughable lyrics? Try these for size...

Spider-Man,
Spider-Man,
Does whatever a
spider can,
Spins a web any size,
Catches thieves just
like flies,
Look out!
Here comes the
Spider-Man.
Spider-Man,
Spider-Man,
Friendly
neighbourhood
Spider-Man,
Is he strong?
Listen bud,
He's got radioactive
blood,
Hey there!
There goes the
Spider-Man.
Spider-Man,
Spider-Man,
Does whatever a
spider can,
Can he swing from a
thread?
Take a look overhead,
Hey there!
There goes the
Spider-Man.
In the dead of night,
At the scene of a
crime,
At the speed of light,
He arrives just in time,
Spider-Man,
Spider-Man,
There goes the
Spider-Maaaaaaaan!

THIS TIME THE VICTORY IS MINE!

A TESTING time for a 'novice' Spider-Man as he takes on an aerial aggressor in the form of The Vulture. Apart from Spidey's more obvious unique abilities, one of his great strengths is his continual use of banal banter and sarcasm to unhinge his opponents.

SWINGERS



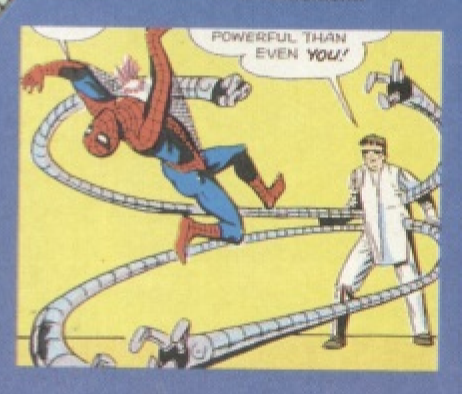
SPIDEY swaps slaps with The Sandman.

I'VE GOT TO KEEP HIM AWAY TILL MY EYES CLEAR! THESE STEEL BEARINGS -- THEY'LL DO THE TRICK!
HERE, SPARKY! KICK THESE AROUND FOR A WHILE!
BAH! IT'S THOSE BLASTED BEARINGS AGAIN!!!

HIGHLY-CHARGED happenings as Spider-Man attempts to dampen Electro's enthusiasm.



OL' WEB-HEAD takes on his former 'costume' in the collected works of Spider-Man Vs Venom.

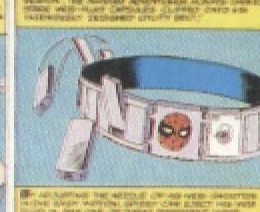


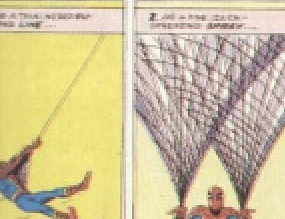
THE WALL-CRAWLER does battle with Doctor Octopus, the villain most likely to appear in the next Spider-Man movie.

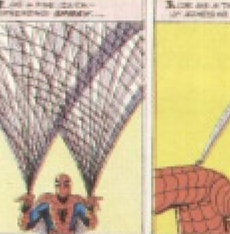


PETER PARKER shares a tender moment with wife Mary Jane Watson-Parker. Parker was never really a big hit with the chicks – at least not until he became Spider-Man and his confidence grew in leaps and bounds.

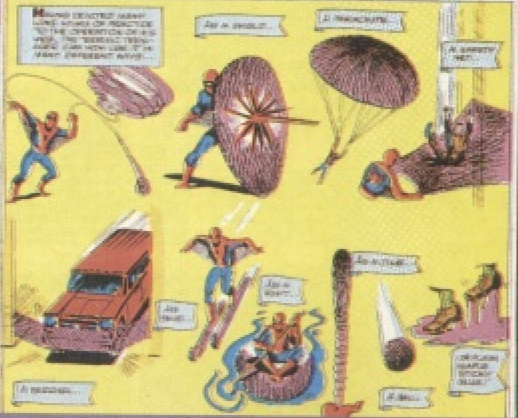
SECRETS of SPIDER-MAN'S WEB















SPIDER WAY...

HERE'S 10 things you never knew about spiders...

BLACK WIDOW spiders eat their husbands after sex. We thought a cigarette was customary, but there you go.

A SPIDER not only has eight legs but also up to eight eyes.

A SPIDER'S bottom has spinnerets which secrete a viscous liquid. This liquid hardens on exposure to the air and forms the web on which it nests and catches its food.

THE BIRD-EATING spider of South America, Mygale, has a body which is two inches long and leg span of 12 inches.

THE WATER SPIDER lives underwater, breathing air trapped in the hairs of its body.

THE VENOM of the North American Black Widow spider is potent enough to kill small animals, but only causes pain and fever in humans, from which they usually recover.

OLD WIVES' TALES are full of references to spiders, one such being that a fever could be cured by wearing a spider in a nutshell on a chain around your neck.

OTHER SPIDER remedies include the cure for jaundice, which involves swallowing a large live house spider rolled up in butter.

SMALL MONEY spiders are so called because in the Old Days a spider on your clothes meant good luck, or that you would come into money.

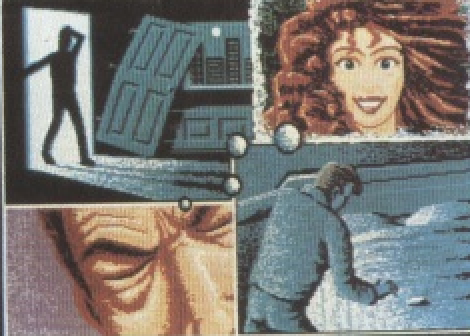
AS FATE would have it, a Spider-Man is a person who works at great height on buildings and constructions.

The Making Of A Spider-Game

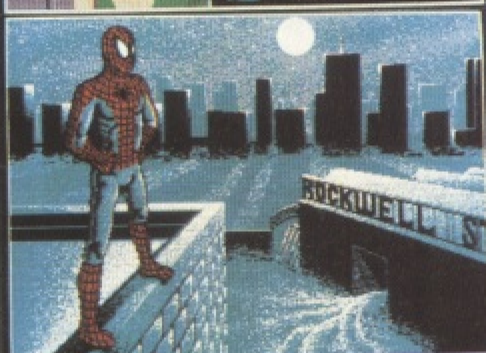
THE TEAM behind this computer incarnation of everyone's favourite wall-crawler is Oxford Digital Enterprise. ODE's previous output for Empire includes Sleeping Gods Lie **(see Review in Issue Eleven) and** Team Yankee **(see Review in Issue 26). We asked ODE's Rick Yapp what it took to translate Spidey to the small screen.**











A SERIES of comic-book style frames set the scene, with ol' webhead arriving at Rockwell Studios at midnight.

"THE ACTUAL CONCEPT and design was a joint effort, although I think the two programmers, John Wood and Kevin Ayre, had the most to do with the game.

"We have a relationship with Marvel, through Paragon in the States who has the Marvel licence. For example, Paragon wrote **Dr Doom**, 16-bit versions, and we just crunched it and did a few bits and bobs on it, and we wrote the 8-bit versions last year. Now, this year, we're writing the game and Paragon's marketing it in the States.

"The scenario is that Mysterio has kidnapped Mary Jane Parker, Spider-Man's wife, in order to lure Spider-Man into a trap. He leaves a message behind saying 'If you ever want to see Mary Jane again, get Spider-Man to meet me at Rockwell Studios at midnight'.

"Rockwell Studios is a deserted film studio, and Mysterio has basically set up lots of traps for Spider-Man and he tries to go through all these disused sets. There are all kinds of sets, western sets and so on. It's got 56 rooms. Some of them are fairly easy, but they get progressively harder. Also, there are lots of robots in each room, which Spider-Man has to get through. So it's a sort of puzzle-cum-platform game really. And also swinging on webs is a very large part of it.

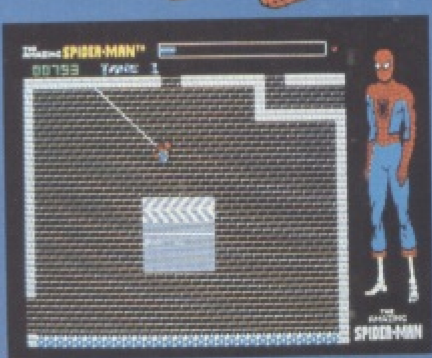
"The platform idea wasn't part of the original brief. It just seemed to fit in quite nicely with the ability to swing on webs properly. And we thought a straight beat 'em up was a bit boring for someone of Peter Parker's intelligence. In this game he can't beat anybody up at all. He can only stun the robots with his webs. He can kill them, but only if he stuns them at the right time.

"One thing you notice is that the Spider-Man sprite is quite small. The reason we've done that is that we can have a massive animation table in there. Because he can be shown in all the orientations, such as walking along ceilings and crawling up walls, there's 256 frames of animation just for the Spider-Man sprite. He can walk, he can crawl, he can swing, he can fire webs, and jump. There are 10 different kinds of robots, and they have varying kinds of animation depending on what they are. There are sharks fins, which doesn't of course take up too many frames, there's Godzilla, and a lot of other strange looking robots.

"We managed to fit a good few movie 'jokes' in there. That's one of the reasons we set it in a movie studio, we thought 'We can have some fun with this'.

"On the sound side there's an original tune that was composed here. It's not really based on any of the previous Spider-Man tunes — the cartoon or anything like that. And after that it's just sampled sound effects.

"The PC version supports all graphics cards, and the AdLib sound board, so you can have 24 channel sound or whatever. You can also set the speed you want to play it at, obviously if you want to play it fast on a slow machine you can't! But you can slow the game down on a fast one. And on all three formats there's a feature which allows you to save position, not to disk, but to RAM... in certain rooms. That may help you get a bit closer to rescuing Mary Jane." ●

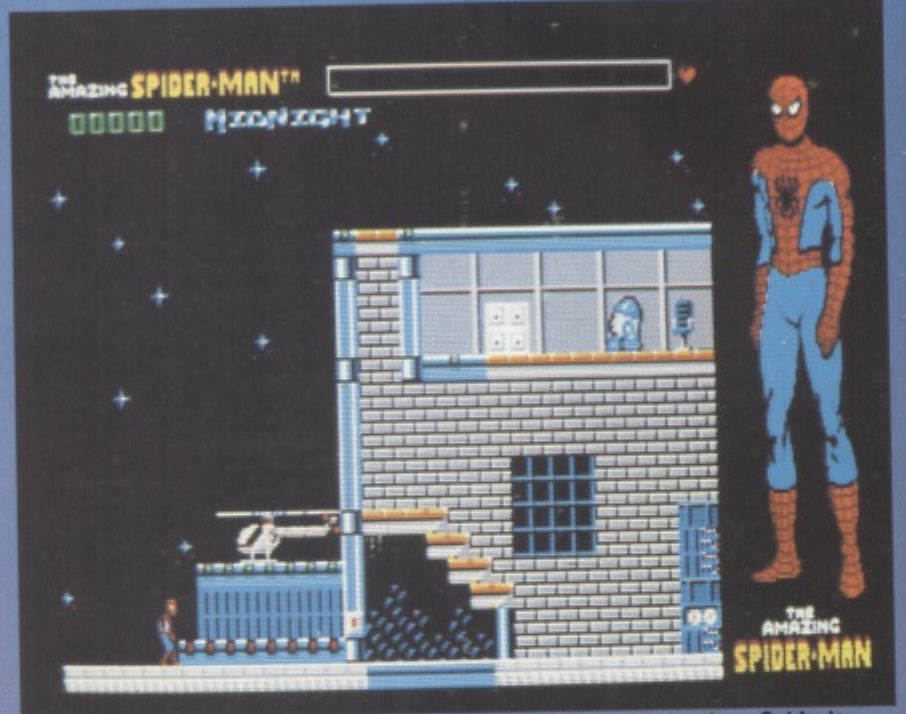


IT WON'T come as any surprise to learn that wall-crawling and web-spinning are an integral part of the action. Spidey's web is used not only to swing to otherwise unreachable areas of the screens but also to stun any of the rogue robot guards patrolling the Studios.





NO, SPIDEY'S not changed into his shorts. This is how his health is relayed.



CONTINUING from where the introductory sequence left off, this is where Spidey's quest begins, outside the studios. Now all he has to do is get inside, overthrow the guards and throw a few awkwardly-placed switches to open up new areas.



ROBOT GUARDS aren't the only adversaries ol' webhead encounters. Fortunately, almost all of them aren't too intelligent and move in predictable patterns.



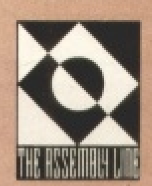
VIRUS ... ATTACK ... HUMAN ... ALIEN ... INVASION ... POISON ... MUTANT ... CLONE ... REPRODUCE ... SURVIVAL? ... ANTIBODIES ... DEFENCE ... ELIMINATE ... REPEL ... CURE ... YOU NEED...



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"When I see a spider in my house my wife won't let me kill it. She says 'How can you kill a spider?' So I have to get a little paper cup and try to catch it and dump it outside. I almost feel like we're relatives."

Stan Lee

So what inspired you to write comics in the first place?



Purely accident – I wanted to be an actor. When I was about sixteen or seventeen there was something called the WPA Federal Theatre in America. It was a government-sponsored theatrical organisation, really to help people who wanted to be in the theatre and didn't have enough funds. I belonged to that and I acted in a number of plays. Orson Welles belonged to it too, actually. I used to think, before he died, when I would mention this to people, it would be nice to think that Orson was giving an interview somewhere... and was saying 'Yeah, and Stan Lee belonged to the thing too!' Although I sort of doubt that that happened. Anyway, you couldn't make much money acting in those days – at least I couldn't – and I was always good at writing, and somebody said to me 'Gee, why don't you think about being a professional writer?' So I was looking at the ads in the paper for Help Wanted, and I saw that they needed somebody at a comic-book company to be an assistant and help out. I applied for the job. I must have been the only one who applied because I got the job! I always thought it would be temporary, and by the time I got to be twenty years old I thought 'This is no job for a grown up, working for a comic-book company'. But every time I was about to leave they gave me another little salary increase or something, so I decided to stay another year. And before I knew it I'd been there all my life! I'm beginning to think it's a permanent job.

Where did you actually get the idea for Spider-Man? I had done quite a lot of superheroes before that. When you create a new superhero the first thing you think of is 'What new power can you give him?' And we already had characters who were strong, and characters who ran fast, and characters who could fly, and I was trying to think of something different. The only thing I could think of was 'Hey, how about somebody who had the powers of an insect and crawl on walls? Maybe that would be fun.' So then I had to come up with a name. I thought Insect-Man was silly, and I didn't think Mosquito-Man made it. Then I remembered when I was a kid there had been a magazine, what we called a 'pulp' magazines... these were just cheap little stories you could buy for dime, and they were printed on cheap pulp paper... Anyway, it was called *The Spider, Master Of Men*. And it was just about a crime-fighter who wore a mask and called himself The Spider, and he went out and caught crooks. To me as a kid that was so glamorous and dramatic... 'He called himself... The Spider!' So I said 'How about if I call my character Spider-Man?' And that's how it happened. Once you knew the name and you knew what the powers were everything else came pretty easily.

Who else were you reading at the time?

I've always been, especially in those days, a voracious reader. I read everything I could get my hands on. I had very eclectic tastes. I would read H G Wells science fiction, Conan Doyle – I loved *Sherlock Holmes* – a lot of O Henry and Mark Twain, and I loved Shakespeare. When I was very young I didn't understand most of what Shakespeare was saying, but I loved the rhythm of the words. Everything he wrote was like poetry. Even if you didn't understand what it said it was beautiful. In fact, years later when I wrote comics like *Thor The God Of Thunder* and *Doctor Strange The Magician*, I would use the type of phraseology, the rhythm and sentence structure that Shakespeare used. But as I say I read everything I could get my hands on. Another thing I loved was *Tarzan*.



Is that where you got Spider-Man's web-swinging from?

Yeah, actually, I thought of Spider-Man as an Urban Tarzan. Where Tarzan swung from tree to tree, Spidey swung from building to building...

Do you suffer from arachnophobia?

No, not me. In fact it's affected me the opposite way. When I see a spider in my house my wife won't let me kill it. She says 'How can you kill a spider?' So I have to get a little paper cup and try to catch it and dump it outside. I almost feel like we're relatives.

Do you like what all the new writers have done to Spider-Man since you let go of it?

Yes, I'm amazed that they're doing it so well, some of the stories are wonderful. The only thing that shocked me after I turned the book over to someone else was a few months later, a girl who I thought maybe some day would marry Spider-Man in a future issue got killed in one of the stories! I wasn't happy about that. Other than that everything is fine.

Talking about his marriage, he's one of the only superheroes who's actually married...

That's right, and the public has lived through his courtship and his wedding... In fact when he got married we had a real ceremony here in the States, at a baseball park called Shea Stadium. There were fifty-five thousand people in the stands waiting to see the baseball game, and before the game started the poor fifty-five thousand of 'em had to suffer through a wedding ceremony conducted by me, in the middle of the field with two actors who played Spider-Man and his bride... It was a big ceremony, it was very funny, it was in all the newspapers... An' I'm standing there asking these two if they take each other to be man and wife, and there was music playing and a lot of other people in costume as other Marvel superheroes, standing around and cheering! We had a nutty publicity department.

Was it a bit like your son getting married?

Oh very much so. I'm glad I didn't have to pay for the wedding. And one of these days he'll probably have a child if I can figure out a way to do it.

Some nice little spin-off comics in that...

Oh yes. We have to figure out if the kid can climb on walls... or just have red hair, although that's not much of a super power.

Which artists' and writers' work do you admire greatly?

Oh there are so many... of the guys who work for us, John Romeda, John Buscema... We have a new guy called Todd McFarlane who's very good. Steve Ditko, who started Spider-Man with me... Jack Kirby, of course, who's done a lot of books with me. And then there are a lot of European artists. I love Moebius' work.

You did a Silver Surfer with him...

Yes, that's right. Let me see... Hugo Pratt, he does a kind of Western character, I like him. There are a lot

STAN LEE is a name synonymous with comics. These days he's the Chairman of Marvel Entertainment, the largest comic-book publisher in America. Years ago he had been the Head Writer, the Editor and the Art Director of the Marvel comic-books, and after that he became the Publisher. He created many of the characters established in today's society. In the sixties, *Spider-Man*, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *The Fantastic Four* were some of the first American comics to make it to these shores, being reprinted in British comics like *Pow!* and *Wham!*. Marvel itself had been in business for at least a year or two before Stan joined in the late thirties, although the company didn't become Marvel until the early 1960's, and that was after it had created Spider-Man, the Incredible Hulk, The Fantastic Four, *Iron Man*, *Daredevil* and all the other Marvel Trade Marks. "We saw that we were doing something new and different that we thought it was time to change the name of the company to give us a new image," Lee explains. Before the Marvel Trade Mark, the company had many names. When Stan came to work for the company it was called Timely Comics, and before it became Marvel it was Atlas Comics. Today the characters have gone from strength to strength, being spun off regularly into TV shows, animated cartoons, computer games and films. One such film is in the offing, a new Spider-Man movie reputedly set to put even the recent *Batman* film to shame!

of English artists I like too, like the guy who did *Watchmen* – David Gibbons, I think he's great. And the fellow who wrote it too – Alan Moore. He's wonderful.

What are your opinions of contemporary works like Watchmen and even the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*?

Originally I think it was supposed to be a parody of our own comic, *The X-Men*, who are teenage mutants. I'm very flattered that it became so successful.

Are you surprised how successful they are?

Nothing on the face of this planet surprises me! I think the people who did the strip are more surprised than anybody. How can you believe it? A little silly strip in a little obscure magazine... bingo! That's America! That's entertainment... that's showbiz!

Do you have a favourite Spidey strip?

No, I've written so many that I don't even remember most of them. Very often I'll be at a convention where I'll be autographing books, and some youngster'll bring me a book to sign, and it's one of the old ones. And I'll just start flipping thought it and I'll say 'Gee, did I write this?' Then I begin to remember it, and I say 'Wow, this is terrific!' I think I'm my own biggest fan.

What about Spidey's foes, which are your favourites? I think my favourites were Dr Octopus, and there was The Sandman, and The Kingpin. He was probably the most realistic of all our characters. His only super power was that he was very strong, and he was very fat, which isn't a super power. The difference was he looked fat but it was all muscle! Those three, at least those are the first three I can remember. We're planning to do a Spider-Man movie, and I'm hoping to have Dr Octopus be the villain in that movie.

Do you have a great deal of contact with home computers?

I use one, in fact I have one at the office, one at home, and a portable. I don't know how I've ever lived without them. I use PC compatibles, and I run *WordPerfect* software. Wherever I am I can write something.

Do you play computer games?

I am aware of the existence of the games, I am aware of the popularity of the games, but I simply have never had the time to play 'em. Strangely enough, I do love my work, I do find it to be fun. There's always something I have to do... a script I have to edit, or story that I have to write, meeting I have to go to, or thing that I have to read... and I'm so involved in movies now, and television, that every spare minute I have I have to rent video cassettes and look at movies I may have missed 'cos there may be an actor that we're considering for a new picture, and there's so much of THAT! Years ago I had so many hobbies, now I don't even have time for a hobby. I'm lucky, because to me working is like leisure. If I had nothing to do, I'd want to do just what I'm doing. Maybe I would take little time to play video games because they look so interesting. The only thing is they're so complicated and they require somuch skill.

Some years ago we were publishing a *Dungeons & Dragons* magazine and comic-book, so I thought I better look and see what this game is all about. So I bought a set and started reading the manuals, and I realised that this is like a life's work. It's like learning another subject in school, you have to study it! You can't just take the game and play it. I never realised that youngsters today can get so involved in what they do that they make a STUDY of it! I imagine these video games can be very similar.

Do you see a future for computers and other media like comics combined?

Oh I think there is so much in the future for computers. They won't be computers as we know them now, I don't think. What's gonna happen is there won't be the great distinction between a television set, a computer, a stereo system and compact disc player. They're all going to become one. You'll have a big screen in your house, and you'll have music, and you'll have games and you'll have all sorts of communications through that screen. I think the future is that everything will be on screens, whether it's a television screen or a computer screen, or some combination of the two. Even now it's too complicated for me, but you can get software to turn your computer into a fax machine, enabling you to fax things. I think the computer's going to change civilisation, it's going to change our social structure, it's going to change the way we live. We've only scratched the surface of what we can do with computers.

As with any artform, innovators such yourself create cliches. Do you find yourself using your own cliches?

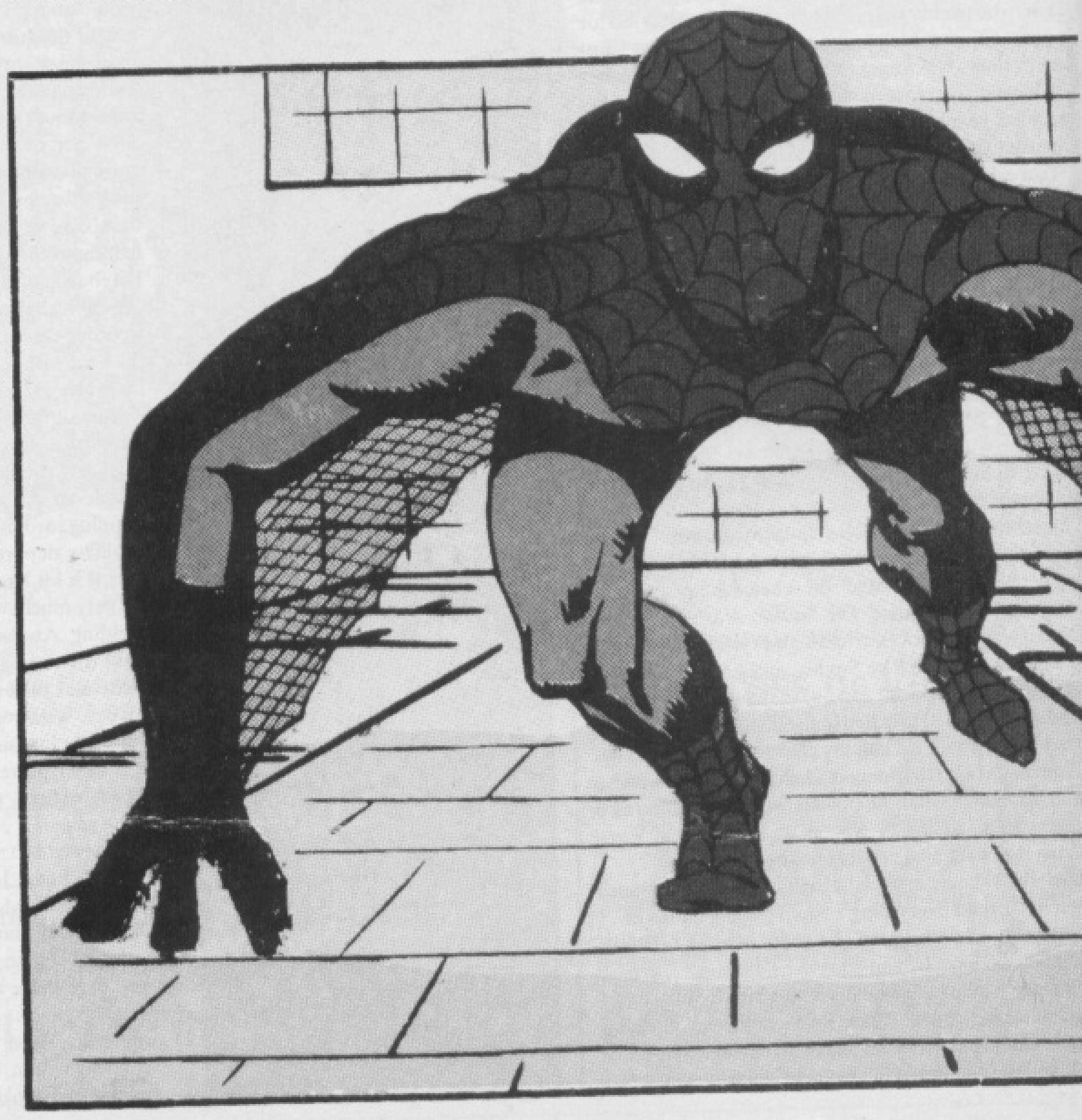
I think that I, and all writers, do our best to avoid usingcliches, or at least use them as little as possible. Now you can only have one basic plot. A villain is trying to do something bad, and the hero has to stop him or her in some way. That's your basic comic-book plot, I don't care what the story is. And of course you just get variations on that. In the beginning it always has to appear as if the villain is going to win, there has to be at least one or two good fight scenes, and in the end the hero has to win, but not in an obvious way. It should be something surprising that enables the hero to win, besides the fact that he uses his powers. We try to make all our characters as different from each other as possible.

When I used to write the books, I even tried to give the characters different dialogue. I would make sure that Spider-Man didn't speak the same as Daredevil, and Daredevil's speech patterns were not the same as Captain America's. But I suppose even Sherlock Holmes, after a while, that was cliched. Sherlock Holmes would say something that seemed miraculous. I mean, how could he possibly have known thatthe cab driver who was driving him had been born in Afghanistan, and had a daughter in an orphan asylum? But then he would explain how he figured that out. So that became a cliche even though each example was different. You can't escape that if you're doing a lot of writing.

Of all the interviews you've done, what was the one subject you've never been asked to talk about but would like to?

Brain surgery! No, I like to talk about whatever I'm asked. I guess everything in the world that doesn't have to do with comics I haven't been asked about! Although it's funny, I have been asked about many things. People are always asking me about philosophy and religion, and what do I think of various social situations. But I never really stopped to think, and I don't think anybody does, 'Gee, I wish they'd ask that' – unless you're trying to sell a book, a movie, a toy, a game or something. Otherwise you just listen to the questions and talk about them as entertainingly as possible.

Nuff said!



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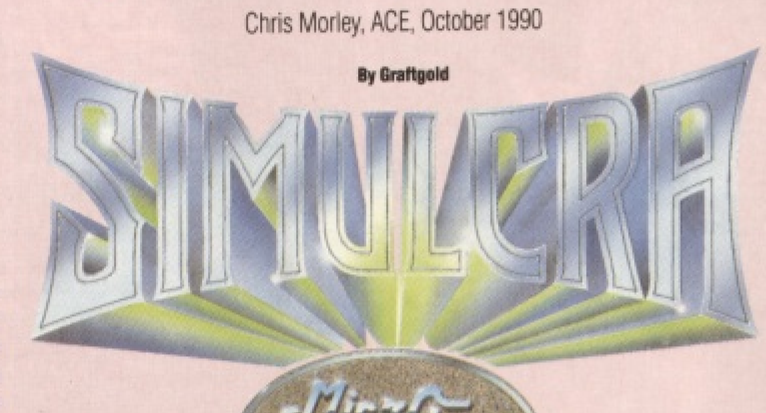
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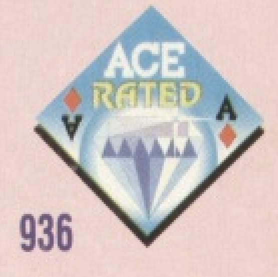
"Just what a game should be: looks good, sounds good, and plays like a dream."

Chris Morley, ACE, October 1990



936





936

The 3D vector graphics system in Simulcra features solid filled 3D graphics with shadows and light intensity surfaces. The system allows solid and wireframe surfaces to be freely mixed. Stipple and transparent/semi-transparent surfaces are also employed.

The game code runs up to 252 non player objects on the map. The game cycle rate and the view cycle are independent so that game time can be kept more or less constant even if the display rate is slowed down.

Special explosion effects are achieved using a highly efficient particle controller that individually moves up to 100 particles. Definitely a game that goes with a bang!

Simulcra uses a grid-based map similar to Virus but includes 'blank' squares, introducing ground-based and flight action



Simulcra is verging on the awesome, conjuring up immediate comparisons with the classic Virus. Your SRV rotates 360 degrees and can fly or drive. The rotation and shading are excellent and the game has a great feeling of speed. Battle is fast and furious and you can power up the SRV with loads of goodies including speed-ups, radar, fire and forget missiles, target display systems, shields, and extra lives.

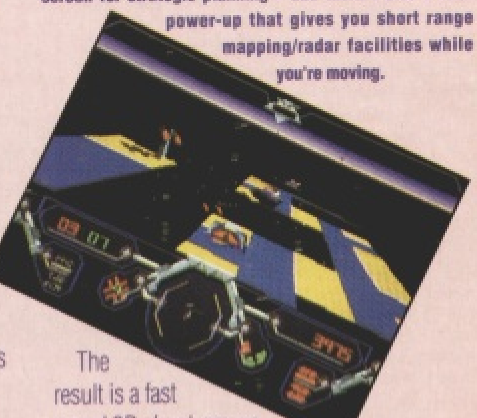
MICROSTYLE hurl you into the computer war of the future and produce a red hot 3D shoot-em-up as an incentive...

Cyberscape rules in the far future, where even war is played out inside massive computer simulators. A particularly unpleasant virus has, however, had the effect of projecting the combat into the real world and as a result you have hordes of bloodthirsty simulcraft pilots wreaking havoc all over the place. Your objective is to enter the 'battle matrix' and destroy the other craft as well as the matrix itself.

You control a sophisticated Suface Reconnaissance Vehicle (SRV) with swing wings that give it limited flight capabilities. You drive your SRV around the matrix, encountering every so often a thin red line that denotes an energy barrier beyond which you cannot pass. You must then locate the relevant energy projector and destroy it, which will lift the barrier and allow you to proceed.

To add variety to an already exciting game, Microstyle have thrown in a wide variety of enemies. First, and most common, are the laser turrets that slowly sweep in a complete circle until they lock onto you, whereupon they fire viciously. Various ground and air attack craft, such as jeeps and small tanks, race around the walkways, thankfully needing only one shot to kill. Then you reach the megatanks – these can only be killed with missiles, but when shot explode in the most satisfactory way yet, by first ejecting the gun turret and then collapsing in on themselves with a terrific sound effect.

Throughout the game you also have access to a map screen for strategic planning – and there's also a neat power-up that gives you short range mapping/radar facilities while you're moving.



The result is a fast paced 3D shoot-em-up that is slightly similar to Resolution 101 in gameplay terms but blends in elements of Falcon and Virus as well. In addition, the grid construction introduces a maze element. Sound effects are superb and add to the sensation of speed. There's also a wonderful intro sequence.

Just what a game should be: looks good, sounds good, and plays like a dream.

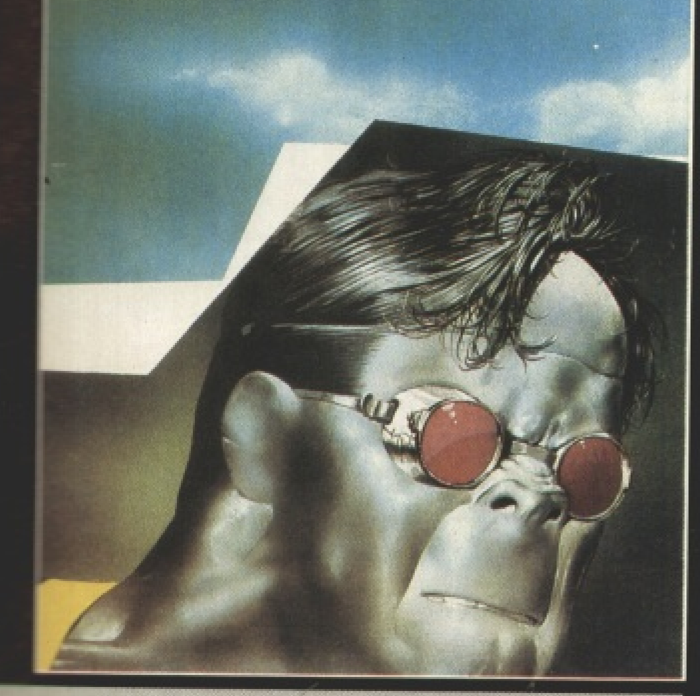


Here at MicroStyle we couldn't think of anything more to add to Chris Morleys' review for Octobers edition of Ace.

RELEASE DETAILS		
ATARI ST	£24.99	OCT 90
AMIGA	£24.99	OCT 90
No other versions planned		

All excerpts quoted by kind permission of Ace

PULLING RANX



RanXerox, punk, robot, muscleman and comic book hero just got digitised. Kati Hamza finds out what makes him tick.







RANXEROX IS A WEIRD kind of hero. He's got a body like Arnold Schwarzenegger and a brain like the innards of a pinball machine. On the outside Ranx is soft, pink flesh, but underneath he's reliant on the kind of electrical gadgetry you'd find in any hi-tech fridge.

No-one knows where he comes from or, even more mysteriously, exactly what a creature like Ranx was manufactured for. These are the facts: RanXerox was created at some unspecified time, by manufacturers unnamed, most probably in Rome. If it weren't for his screw-top head, the giant battery insert where his spine should be, or those piercing violet eyes cleverly constructed from a pair of swimming goggles, he'd be just like you and me (only thicker).

Closer inspection reveals that Ranx is no more natural than dehydrated tea. He's three times as strong as Mohammed Ali, four times as hard as Superman and a lot more gratuitously violent to boot. A minor irritation is enough to prompt him to assassinate the entire contents of a railway carriage or squash the fingers of innocent flower girls until the blood runs through his hands.

Squeezing Rank's right nipple turns his internal radio on (nobody is quite sure exactly how it's tuned in). Flip open his head and the electronically-educated hand needs only flick a switch to turn him off. Two other tell-tale robot signs: RanXerox has blue lips and comes equipped with dummy ears. There's just a lump of smooth synth-skin where wax and hairs should be. ▶



RANX ON FILE: THE COMIC BOOKS

RANXEROX IN NEW YORK

In RanXerox's debut adventure it's Lubna's stupidity that puts Ranx's life in danger. On a desperate trip to her drugs supplier she's persuaded to demonstrate what happens when she switches off the lump of synthetic sinew that acts as her bodyguard, and is instantly kidnapped. After much passionate searching, murdering and mauling, aided and bedded by Lubna's friends he finally rescues her, only to find it's all been a dastardly ploy. It was all a complex ruse to get Ranx to New York. He's the only machine capable of learning how to impersonate Fred Astaire in the 24 hours left before curtains go up on a major Fred retrospective. Needless to say he's a great success: Ranx may not have Fred's looks but he's sure got magic metal feet.

RANXEROX 2: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LUBNA

Ranx and Lubna are stuck in New York, victims of 20th Century Inflation. Lubna works as a babysitter (tying up the kids for 20 bucks), while Ranx cruises the night streets as a taxi driver with his friend Timothy, the kind of guy who gets kicks out of watching the victims of car accidents die. Using his usual reserves of charm and diplomacy Ranx manages to survive a snuff video, gives Timothy the biggest thrill of his life and gets Lubna a ticket back to Rome all in one night. But is life really any more fun back home?

THE CAST

RANXEROX He's big, he's strong and he's very violent. RanXerox of indeterminate age and indeterminate origin may be strong on metal but he's heavy on animal passion. Inmoments of desperation or when his batteries are low he reverts into bestial mode: the RanXerox scampering dog look. Ranx frequently unscrews his cranium for minor soldering operations and has tendency lose his head. Hats and even colanders have been known to work as temporary substitutes.





LUBNA
Young, pretty and totally corrupted, Lubna, just 12 (going on 13), is cared for by nobody, spends most of her time shooting up or hanging out in bars. She's fond of Ranx but not fond enough for total faithfulness especially when she meets a guy she wants.

CARMEN
She learns fast. At three-and-a-half she runs her own gang (armed with guns, knives and whips) and is a veteran at getting her StartRite shoes into the sleaziest Roman joints. One of Lubna's closest friends, Carmen has learnt most of her tricks from her elder brother, Charlot The Sniper.

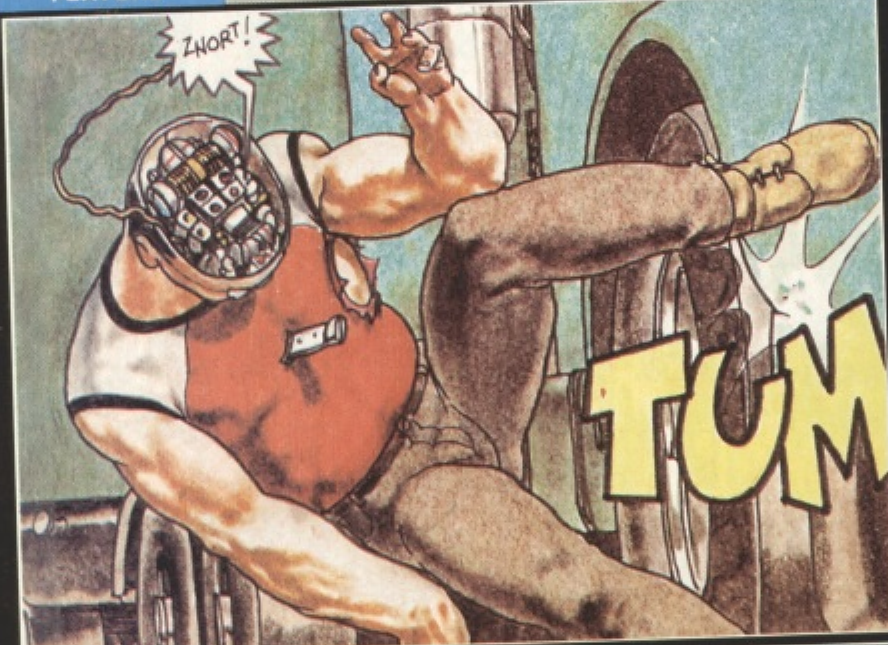




GIORGIO
Fated forever to live with a second head as a result of drugs taken by his pregnant mother, Giorgio leads a solitary life in his bedroom listening to Elvis records. His better head, the smaller Romeo, a peace-loving cerebellum, battles in vain against his violent rages. When riled, nothing can stop Giorgio and his rattling chainsaw. Or can it?

MR VOLARE
Head-honcho of amulti-national music corporation, Mr Volare is the kind of man who can make robots famous. Unfortunately he doesn't know when to leave their girlfriends alone...





RANX: THE COMPUTER GAME



NEW YORK, PALERMO, Rome - wherever Ranx goes, life's just one big platform game. The bad guys carry knives and machine guns; everyone else is a walking punch-bag just asking to be hit. Hidden somewhere in this urban jungle is a series of objects - weapons, aeroplane tickets and money among them. Collected and used in the correct order they add up to a return flight to New York.

Ranx is not what you'd call a delicate machine. His emotions are generated by crude and primitive electronic circuits. They respond to three primary stimuli: colour, timbre of voice, and smell. These in turn release mechanical relays which dictate rudimentary emotional responses such as anger, hate, love or indifference. As this is, at best, a makeshift and haphazard setup, RanXerox is renowned for his unpredictability. He can kick you in the head, satisfy your wildest desires and smash the skull of your worst enemy in a matter of seconds, generally without pausing for breath. To a machine it's all the same.

Generally Ranx is fickle, but he does have two overriding motivations. The first is a bestial desire to survive: even robots come with a basic drive for self-preservation. The second is on an all together higher plane. By some quirk of machinery, reputedly due to a malfunction incurred from a kick in the head in a bar room brawl, RanXerox has fallen in love.

The apple of his eye is a thoroughly modern woman. Lubna doesn't want to work, she steals and forges to make money and she's addicted to cocaine. At the ripe old age of 12 she's also a veteran of Rome's sleaziest hangouts: she knows where to go, she knows who to see and she portions out advice to younger members of her gang. They don't need it: most of them have known how to handle a blade, pick pockets and do drugs since the age of three-and-a-half.

RanXerox is clearly a monster, but in the world in which he lives, a distorted version of the late 1980s, he doesn't even stand out. This is a Rome in which people frequently get shot by psychos on public transport, where heroin comes in seven different colours and mutilation is the trendy way to get your kicks.



IT JUST ISN'T safe to go out in broad daylight these days. Wherever you look there's a guy with a machine gun, a ninja chucking shurikens or some psycho armed with a chainsaw. Ranx does what a robot has to do, though too much fighting can lead to body damage. Luckily some doped-out bio-worker has left the odd spare part lying around and there are several power sources to provide a refreshing battery re-charge.

RanXerox, anti-hero, metal monster and walking radio tower is the brainchild of comic artist Tanino Liberatore and writer Stefano Tamburini. Together the Italian duo has created a machine that's violent, bloody and often repulsive. Ranx kills indiscriminately and he doesn't spare the innocent. Nor do the comics. RanXerox's activities are shown in sexually detailed frames so explicit they are strictly for adults only (what's shown here is the less controversial stuff). The emphasis of the artwork is on realism. RanXerox is so offensive partly because his flesh and body look so real.

To appreciate these bizarre chronicles of the underage beauty Lubna and her metallic beast, Ranx, you have to take their adventures with a pinch of salt. Clearly a battery-charged Superman with rippling muscles and a tendency to shout 'Znort!' isn't meant to be taken at face value. RanXerox encapsulates everything that is worst about modern urban life. Ranx has no morals, he's congenitally violent, he furthers drug abuse, he corrupts the young and he certainly doesn't practise safe sex. The irony is that this man-made jumble of circuitry, capable of nothing more than the most rudimentary electronic impulses is the closest thing this parallel world has to a hero because everyone else is even worse. Ranx's love for Lubna is his one redeeming feature: love engendered accidentally by a kick in the head. ●



TANINO LIBERATORE and Stefano Tamburini (with friend), the men behind Ranxerox's iron brain. The idea came to them in the early 1980s.

IN DIGITISED FORM, RanXerox, Roman robot extraordinaire, is known exclusively by his pithier nickname Ranx (RanXerox sounds just too like the photocopier manufacturer). **Ranx** by UbiSoft is a lot cleaner and tamer than Ranx by Tamburini and Liberatore. He had to be. A lot of gamesplayers are minors — drugs and paedophilia don't go down too well with the people who watch over them. When neither of the available RanXerox books proved suitable, UbiSoft uncovered an unfinished RanXerox story, sat down with Liberatore and discussed how it should end.

The upshot is a plot which still centres around drugs but in a rather more wholesome way. Psycopeste is the disease of the 90s, it's ravaging the planet, and it's being beamed in from outerspace. The symptoms are nasty: sufferers have to cope with acute pain, an unfashionable purple rash and a tendency to psychosis. Already the Pope has been wiped out by a kamikaze prostitute and it looks like the United States' President is next...

RANX
Ubi Soft
Available NOW
For Amiga & Atari ST, £24.99

By some bizarre twist of fate, New York is the one place worst affected, and only Ranx is man enough to take the vaccine there. Hotly pursued by Lubna's father (the vaccine is produced by him) he battles against screen after screen of psychopathic maniacs. His mission: to make it to New York. His passion: to return to Rome and seek out Lubna whom daddy has hidden away somewhere.

Inevitably, all this can't quite capture the full flavour of the comic, though Ranx - a run of the mill platform affair - is better than you might expect. There's a convincing atmosphere of sleaze and decay and enough of an arcade element to keep you collecting and punching for a while. There are plenty of slick graphical and sonic touches, including some sleazy low-life sampled city sounds. But ultimately it's design rather than execution that lets it all down. Don't expect any of the risque elements that have given RanXerox his comic book following. If you want a taste of that, read the books.

IF YOU PUNCH first you can't ask questions later. Sometimes a bit of cool talking reaps its rewards. Unfortunately Ranx's manufacturers didn't weld a dictionary into his brain. The full gamut of his expressions are a disarming laugh, an insult, a quizzical look and a warlike 'ZNORT!' In the right situation, the effect is magical.



IT DOESN'T TAKE much for a big guy like Ranx to run a small battery down. When things get too tough our hero's knees buckle and his head falls off.

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shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game and not the screen graphics which vary considerably different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.

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NEXT MONTH!

IT'S NINETEEN NINETY THE ONE!

A NEW YEAR IS UPON US! And what better way to see out The Old and bring in The New than the January issue of The One. Here's a taster of what we have in store for you in 28 days' time...

FREE!

INSIDE there will be a rather swish, not to mention sexy, 1991 calendar with a difference. It's just the thing to brighten up those bland bedroom walls!

DISK-O INFERNO!

WATCH OUT for that perky piece of plastic stuck on front of the cover of the next issue. Packed into 20 grams of plastic and metal (plus some paper for the label) is a ton of entertainment in the form of a playable preview of a hot new title...

A DANGEROUS MAN

LEGENDARY programming genius David Braben – the man behind the classics **Elite** and **Virus** – reveals all, including details of his current project, the eagerly awaited **Elite II**.

GALLIC GAMES GO GOLD

FOLLOWING the success of **Future Wars** and **Operation Stealth**, Delphine's taking to the water with its next Cinematique epic **Cruise For A Corpse**. We hop across the Channel to look at Cruise and much more besides!

TOO MUCH WORK TO HANDLE

YES, THERE'S MORE that too much Work In Progress at the moment. The One has tracked down some of the year's most eagerly-awaited sequels – plus a few that no-one's even heard of yet!

AND OF COURSE...

MORE IN-DEPTH REVIEWS of all the top stuff, including **Dragon's Lair II: Timewarp**, **Wrath Of The Demon**, **SWIV**, **Prince Of Persia**, **Billy The Kid** and... And even more besides that can't be mentioned here.

GET REAL!

WE TOOK A TRIP to a rather large Computer Graphics Exhibition in London to bring you a look at the latest in big-noise visuals. Plus, there's some wonderful weirdness with virtual reality to experience.

GEO WHIZZ!

SNK'S TECHNICALLY STUNNING new home console, the Neo Geo, is taken apart and played to death by our team of white-coated boffins. Is it really worth putting your 16-bit baby up for adoption or what?

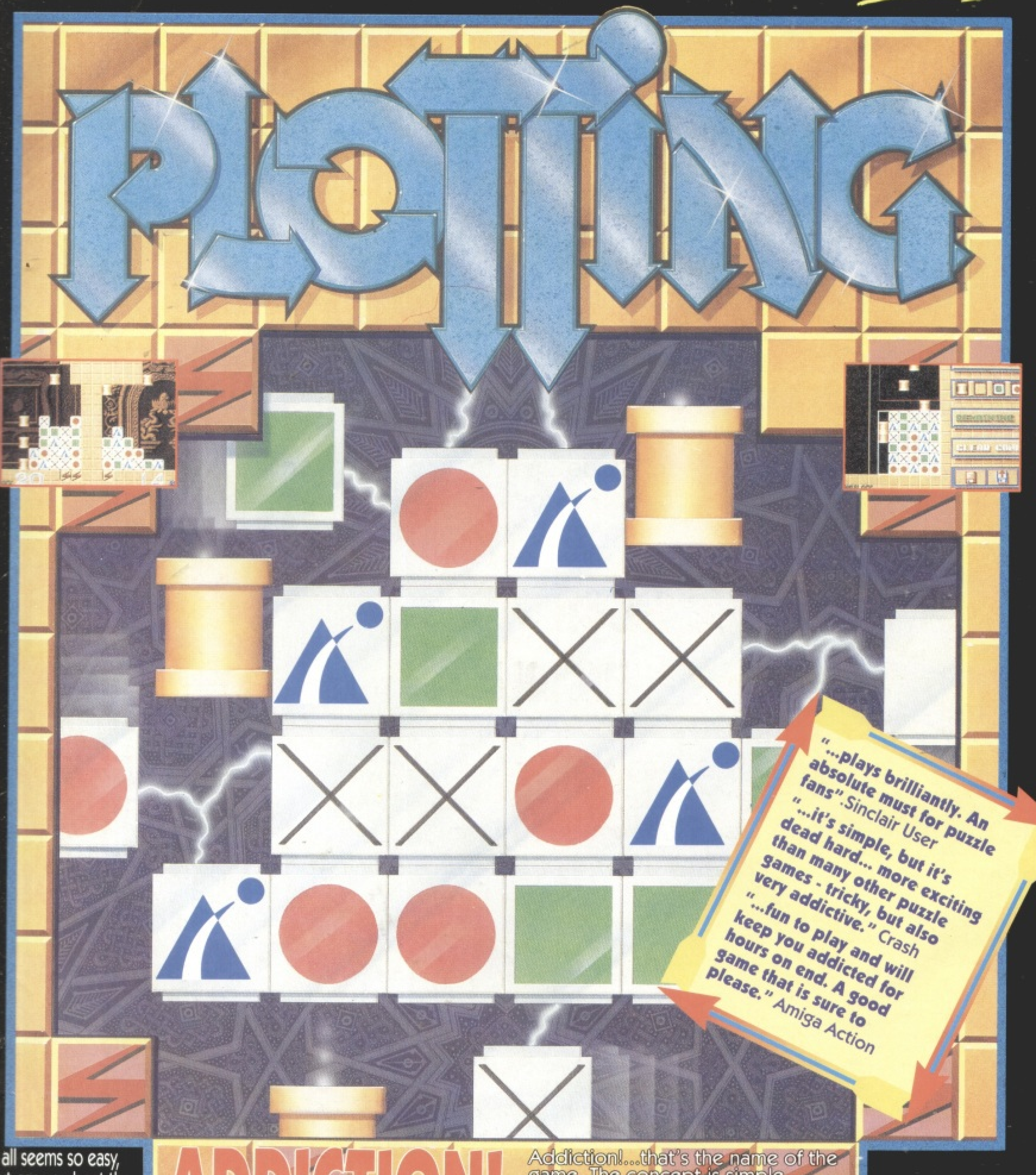
SO WHAT'S THE DAMAGE?

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THE ONE ISSUE 28

ON SALE FROM LATE DECEMBER

PLOT YOUR OPPONENTS DOWNFALL AND...STRIKE



It all seems so easy, but can you beat the micro or your partner, at this hideously mind boggling game.
Special blocks will give you extra lives... GREAT!... but believe me, you'll need to take every advantage of this software's hardware! You'll need the skill of a Rubi-Cube master and the reflexes of a pigeon at a skeet shoot! Plot your move, take aim and block 'em out!... It's that simple... as simple as grilling ice cubes!

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Then there's the gas guzzling cadillac jock - a cool specimen, elbow hanging on the door rail, a serious looking piece in his hand and ready to blow you away as he rolls down main street leaving you coughing lead.

It's not all bad!... You've got a chopper to back you up, a mean, shiny street machine, some heavy metal hardware and some pretty neat moves. And what about the king pin... did I say he was Mr. Big?...

No, he's

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